

Wednesday December 18 1996

Abu Dhabi D 6.50
Albania L 2.20
Andorra FF 10
Australia AS 30
Austria S 10.85
Belgium BF 35
Brazil R 12.50
Canada CA 1.00
Czech Republic KC 50
Denmark DK 15
Ecuador D 10.50
Finland FM 12
France FF 10
Germany DM 3.50
Greece D 400
Hong Kong HK 25
Hungary F 220
Iceland IK 100
India IN 50
Israel IS 15.50
Italy L 2,000
Japan Y 110
Korea KR 150
Kuwait KD 9.50
Labrador LB 2
Latvia LV 200
Lithuania LT 200
Luxembourg LF 50
Malaysia M 270
Malta ML 2.40
Mauritius MU 25
Netherlands G 4.00
New Zealand NZ 15
Norway N 100
Pakistan PK 80
Poland P 20
Portugal E 240
Romania R 10
Russia R 2.75
Saudi Arabia R 10
Singapore S 10
Slovakia SK 250
Slovenia S 200
Spain P 200
Sweden SK 17
Switzerland SF 3.20
Taiwan T 100
Thailand TH 50
Turkey TL 1,750
USA US 2.75

The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46,739

What Felix Dennis did next

Whiz-kid of Oz

G2 with European weather



Comment, page 9

Catherine... Why is... so keep...

Society

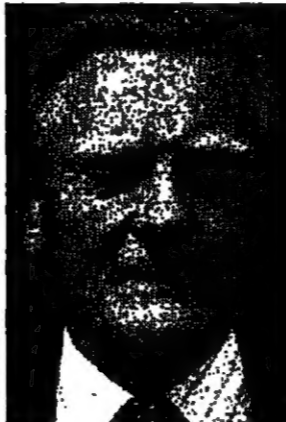


Labour MEP Hugh Kerr, threatened with deselection for allegedly bringing party into disrepute

Tories caught cheating in crucial vote

Michael White Political Editor

THE Government was last night attempting to shrug off Labour and Liberal Democrat outrage after the discovery that Tory whips had cheated the Opposition over the votes of three MPs in order to guarantee victory in the tight Commons debate on fishing policy.



"The Whips are a Byzantine part of the constitution. Whether this or that was said in private and to whom, I do not know. But whatever happened, we would have won that vote."

Michael Heseltine (left), yesterday

room. But a whips spokesman said they had nothing to apologise for — a judgment not shared by more experienced Tory veterans of the whips' office. Last Thursday two sick Labour MPs, Jimmy Dunning and Martin Redmond, were "traded" against two Tories, Mr Shepherd and Sir Keith, by George Madia, number three in the Labour whips' pecking order. On Monday he traded two more, Norman Godman and Gareth Wardell, when Mr Conway sent him a note — published last night — saying: "George, two further names as promised. E. Speed — R. Shepherd 4/4. Yours, Derek."

The Labour MEP: I only offered Tony some advice The Party: You're out, comrade

Stephen Bates in Brussels

THE first victim of New Labour's drive to exert discipline and prevent elected members bringing the party into disrepute will be a left-wing member of the European Parliament who heckled Tony Blair at October's party conference.

leader in the European Parliament, said Mr Kerr had brought the party into disrepute by heckling at party meetings and badgering Mr Blair as he attended a reception organised by the privatised gas companies at the party conference in Blackpool.

apparatchiks were livid that I had deflected the Great Leader on his way from the arena, but frankly it was very civilised and I cannot see that I have brought the party into disrepute. The leadership of the 63 Labour MEPs in the European Parliament has been stung into action for fear of losing influence with Mr Blair and his inner circle at Westminster. Mr David said: "From now on people who do step out of the line will be dealt with. The party has a right to demand certain standards of decent and civilised behaviour and in my view Mr Kerr has not shown that. He is being made an example of."

member of the Trotskyite International Socialist group wrote earlier this year: "We desperately need a Labour government but one that will not strike the radical socialist policies necessary to achieve a better deal for all." The MEPs' group has yet to adopt the code of conduct that is likely to do so early in the new year. Its current sanction against Mr Kerr amounts to an attempt to deprive him of his chairmanship of the parliament's delegation to Australia, but Mr David said that unless he fell into line tougher measures could be taken. "If his misbehaviour continues, disciplinary action could be taken under existing procedures, including the removal of the party whip which would mean he was not eligible for reselection... and that will be considered."



Zaireans greet devil they know

Ruaridh Nicoll in Kinshasa reports on the return from convalescence of President Mobutu

EMERGING on to the steps of his chartered plane, Mobutu Sese Seko, the man in the leopard-skin hat, looked out happily on the country he has pillaged for 30 years. He was greeted by an enormous roar. Thousands of Zaireans waved under the jet that had flown him to the capital, Kinshasa, yesterday from exile in France as if they wanted to carry the plane on their shoulders. After nearly a year their "marabout" had come home. "Each time that Zaire has been threatened in the past, I have never pulled back. I will never pull back," he said.

lowed by a fleet of planes loaded with washing machines, television sets and video-recorders bought during his medical convalescence on the French Riviera. Behind the public show of affection there is a vast land seething with resentment and unrest after three decades of corruption, misrule and now armed rebellion. Gaston Kakuji, spokesman for Laurent Kabila, president of the rebel Alliance of Democratic Forces, said Mr Mobutu's return changed nothing. "We know he is preparing a counter-attack, but we are confident and prepared to respond. The regime of Mr Mobutu is a sick regime," he said by telephone from Brussels. "We need a new man to reconstruct the country." Zairean state radio had broadcast appeals on Monday for residents of Kinshasa to turn out in huge numbers to greet the president — and they responded in style. Neglect does not breed contempt in this country and thousands waited to welcome him. "It's happiness, total happiness," said Wabusa Gerembo, aged 38, from Kinshasa, as he waited for the plane. "We know he is living and walking turn to page 2, column 8"

The Guardian International & The Observer Briefcase advertisement with image of a briefcase and ordering details.

Inside Steven Packman, who denies supplying ecstasy to Leah Betts, may face a another trial after a jury was unable to reach a verdict. 4

Britain Germany's Speaker was at the centre of sleaze allegations over claims she used costly official transport for her private use. 7

World News A committee of MPs highlighted several weaknesses in the Bank of England's handling of the collapse last year of Barings Bank. 11

Finance Wimbledon to be rebuilt except for its two towers is to be the English national stadium with Manchester City disappointed. 15

Sport Comment and Letters 9; Obituaries 10; G2; Crossword 18; Weather 16; Radio 18; TV 18

Subscription form with fields for name, address, postcode, and payment details.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.

Sketch

Fading Twilight of the Dwarves



Simon Hoggart

PARLIAMENT has become an endless version of the Ring Cycle. Like Bernard Levin, we are fated to sit in the same uncomfortable seat, witnessing the same repeated events...

from goosing chalet girls in ski resorts - I supplied the last two, but I'm sure that's what he meant. Mr Major said: "There is no doubt that this is a glowing report..."

Review

Fast show fails Schoenberg

Andrew Clements

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group/Harding Queen Elizabeth Hall

BRIMMINGHAM Contemporary Music Group is the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's younger sibling, drawing its members from the ranks of the orchestra but rapidly carving out a profile of its own...

to 1983, and Kai for cello and chamber orchestra was one of the major fruits of that collaboration, composed in 1980 for the group's principal cellist, Ulrike Heinen...

Bomb convictions stand after report finds contaminated machine did not affect explosives evidence

Howard bars IRA appeals

ALAN TRAVIS Home Affairs Editor

MICHAEL HOWARD, the Home Secretary, insisted last night that the convictions of 14 IRA bombers will stand after receiving the results of an official inquiry into the discovery of contaminated equipment at the Government's Forensic Explosives Laboratory.



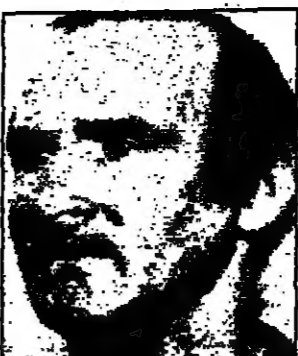
Patrick Hayes... jailed for Harrods litter bin blast



Jan Taylor... alleged to be a splinter group member



Dennis Kinsella... jailed for Warrington gasworks bomb



John Kinsella... petty crook who allegedly buried Semtex



Gerald Mackin... jailed for planting 12 bombs in London

The cases

THE 14 cases that Professor Brian Caddy looked at were: SEAN McNULTY, jailed for 15 years in 1994 for bombing oil and gas terminals on Tyneside...

ROBERT FRYERS, a Belfast bomber serving 25 years for conspiracy to cause explosions. Was arrested at north London bus stop with a Semtex device in a holdall.

HUGH JACK, a Scottish turkey farm worker, jailed for 20 years. His defence claimed he was an unwitting stooge of Fryers who used his home to store explosives.

ETHEL LAMB, Canning's English lover, was 60 when jailed for three years. He duped her into using her west London home as a bomb factory. Since died.

NICHOLAS MULLEN, jailed for 30 years in 1994. The IRA quartermaster was detained after discovery of a bomb factory in Clapham, south London.

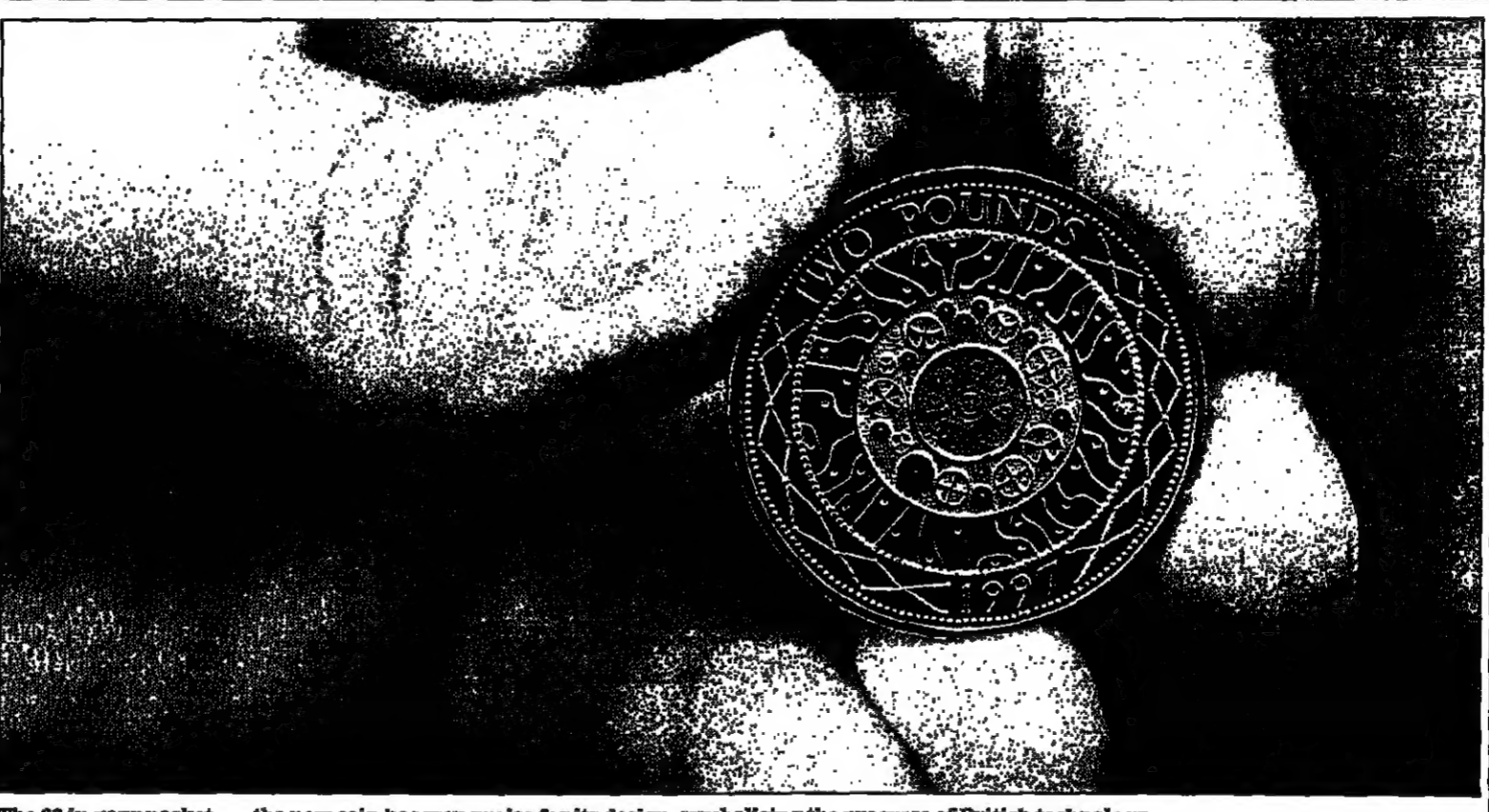
It was only a fortunate accident that brought the problem to light. But his detailed examination of all 14 cases had shown that the explosive traces had "no observable effect" on the samples tested.

that the evidence of contamination should be tested in the Court of Appeal. Neil O'May, solicitor for Dennis Kinsella, said: "Every case where the prosecution has relied on evidence from this laboratory to convict people should be referred to the Court of Appeal without any other question arising."

body is surprised by the outcome. But it won't stop the campaign to prove the innocence of any of these people. Lawyers for Sean McNulty, whose conviction relied most heavily on the forensic evidence, said the Caddy report would prove "most relevant" for his Court of Appeal hearing, which is pending.

with two of Prof Caddy's recommendations. He said that the case for a Forensic Sciences Inspectorate implied a "system of statutory regulation" which was more far reaching than the advisory council recommended by the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice four years ago.

part in explosives should end. He argued there were cases where what was thought were simple incendiary devices turned out to be bombs. But Mr Howard rejected this, saying he did not want to remove police discretion altogether.



The £2 in your pocket... the new coin has won praise for its design, symbolising the progress of British technology

Mint's £2 sweetie coins market in good taste

Martin Wainwright

THE British answer to the euro was unveiled yesterday, with a gritty design of cogs and mechanical widgets to contrast with the pastel sketches of architecture favoured by Brussels.

face value of £2. Angela Knight, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, denied that the new denomination - which follows a series of trial commemorative £2 coins in the last decade - was a backdoor version of inflation.

Aesthetic opinion was generally agreed that this would be a good thing, with the design and double colouring winning points for taste as well as imagination.

The coin also has a milled rim with the inscription "standing on the shoulders of giants", from Sir Isaac Newton's modest description of how earlier thinkers had helped him to discover gravity.

For the lucky people let through by the army, a vast buffet had been laid out beside the glorious roads of the Congo river. There Mr Mobutu made a 10-minute speech. "I'm not going to disappoint you. I know your expectations and your hopes," he said.

Zaireans welcome back devil they know

continued from page 1 and the joy is shared by all Africans. For 30 years he has won wars, and he has kept the country together. What has happened in the east has happened because he's absent and now the enemy are in retreat.

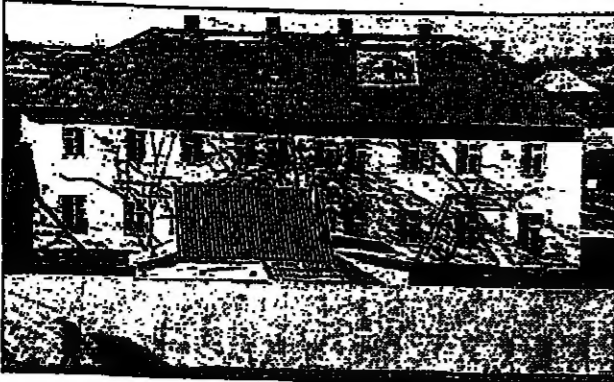
When the president's plane landed, the army pushed back the hordes from the ramp in front of the VIP lounge. Mr Mobutu was met at the bottom of the ramp by two girls with elaborate bouquets of flowers. Wearing a natty, flower-patterned tunic, black trousers and a smile, he made his way to a podium where he raised a black, silver-tipped cane above his head. He looked well enough - the prostate cancer had not killed him yet.

Later, a young man, surrounded by friends, murmured: "He is a great man, a great man for the army, but a terrible president." "Thousands more people lined the road along Mr Mobutu's 20-mile drive into the city centre, singing and shouting. Stylishly dressed people mingled with the poor in the run-down city.

Advertisement for Dell Dimension XPS P133s Business Bundle. Features include Intel Pentium III processor, 16MB SDRAM, 512Kb cache, 266 EIDE hard drive, 512MB PowerGraph 64 3D PCI graphics card, 15" colour SVGA monitor, 8-speed CD-ROM drive, integrated 16-bit sound and AC970 speakers, and Microsoft Windows 95 & MS Office Professional 95. Price: £9.99 per week (£11.97 inc. delivery and VAT). Includes a free upgrade to a Twelve Speed CD-ROM Drive for the first 500 orders only.

صكنا من الامم

Aid agencies under fire



Red Cross pulls foreign staff out of Chechnia after nurses are killed in hospital atrocity

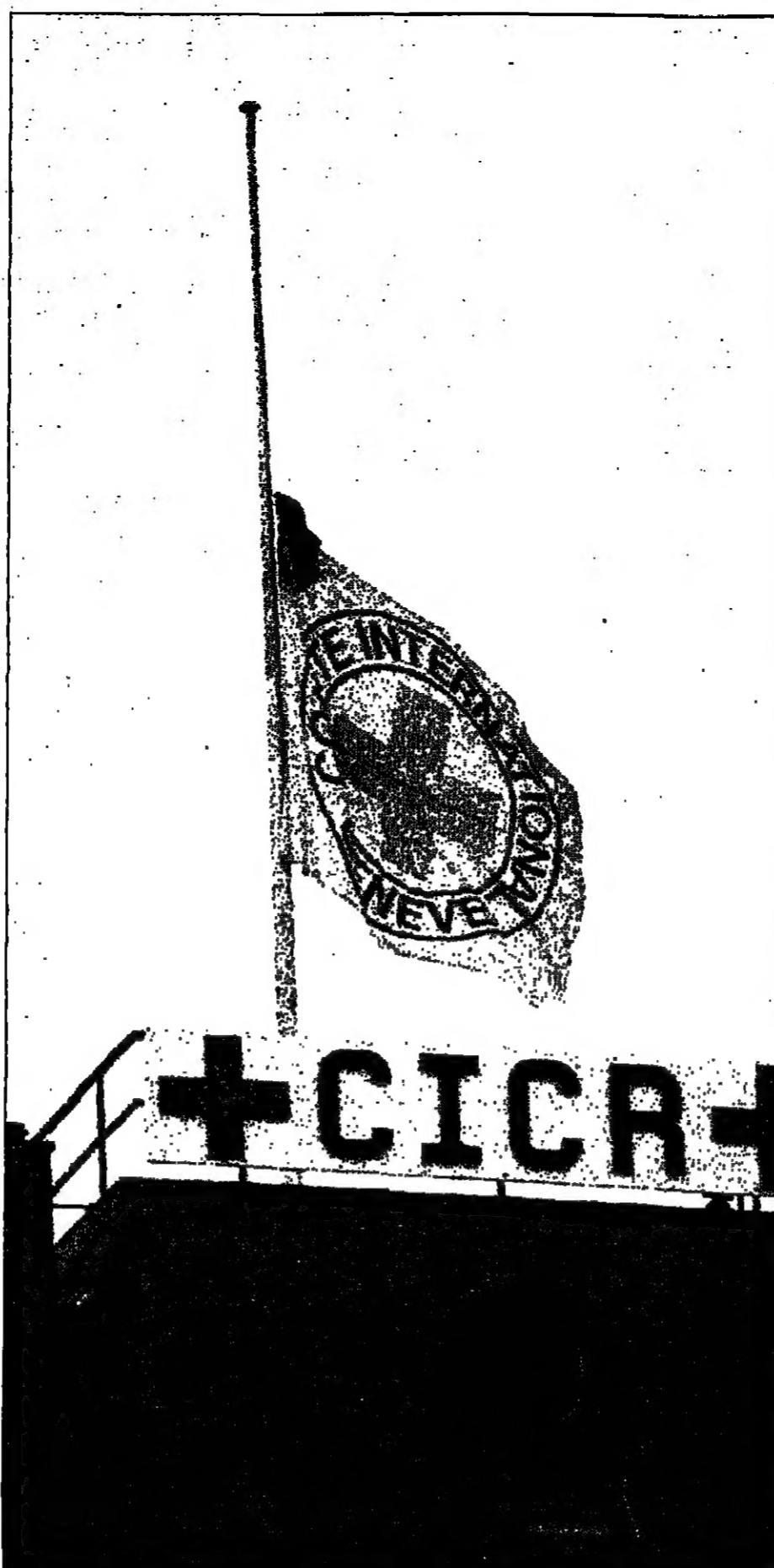
David Hearst in Moscow

SENIOR officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross questioned last night whether international aid organisations could continue to work in war zones after five nurses were murdered as they slept in their beds in a hospital in southern Chechnia yesterday.

Masked gunmen smashed down the doors of a recently opened Red Cross hospital in Novye Atagi, a village south of the capital Grozny, and, using silencers, shot dead each of the nurses. A construction technician was also murdered. A seventh victim, left for dead, survived with gunshot wounds and was being evacuated last night.



It was the worst single atrocity the Red Cross has suffered in its 128-year history. Announcing that all foreign Red Cross staff were being pulled out of Chechnia, Thierry Meyrat, head of the delegation in Moscow, said he was "very pessimistic" that they would ever return.



The Red Cross flag flies at half-mast at its headquarters in Geneva after the assassination of six delegates in Novye Atagi hospital (above left)

tion providing medical help, clean water, sewerage repair and meals for schoolchildren. Russian aid agencies were among those who have already been pulled out after a spate of kidnappings and armed attacks. Two large ransom demands have been paid by foreign aid agencies to recover their staff.

The dead were all senior members of the ICRC. They were identified last night as Hans Eikerhout, a construction technician from the Netherlands; Nancy Malloy, a medical administrator, aged 51, from Canada; nurses Ingeborg Rose, aged 42, and Gunhild Myklebust, aged 55, from Norway; Sheryl Thayer from New Zealand; and Fernanda Cavado, aged 45, from Spain.

Christophe Hensche, the Swiss national in charge of the Novye Atagi office, was wounded. A German doctor and two X-ray technicians who were asleep in an adjacent building were unharmed. The shootings were designed to shatter Chechnia's fragile peace as Russian troops continue to withdraw before elections planned for January 27.

Turmoil after Saunders win

Dan Atkinson in Strasbourg and David Gow

THE embattled Serious Fraud Office last night vowed to resist any attempt by the disgraced former Guinness chairman Ernest Saunders to overturn his conviction for fraud after he won a substantial victory in his decade-long battle to clear his name.

most certainly have to be abandoned. Tony Woodcock, of solicitors Stephenson Harwood, said last night: "The European Court has said it is not good enough for suspects' rights to be curtailed in court cases."

The former Guinness chairman's rights were breached by the use in Crown Court of evidence he had given on pain of imprisonment, the court ruled. "The right not to incriminate oneself lies at the heart of a fair procedure and applies to all types of criminal proceedings," the judges said.

Heritage chief censured

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

SENIOR Whitehall civil servant ran up hundreds of pounds of unauthorised expenses on a corporate charge card, got his employer to pay £4,500 for his old furniture and concealed details of a £181,000 advertising account, says a report published today.

own corporate American Express card and ran up a £5,800 bill over his 18 months in the job. Most of the complaints were about Mr Green entertaining guests at between £22 and £50 a head, breaking the Whitehall guideline limit of £21 to £24 per person a meal.

An investigation by Price Waterhouse exposed all three areas of misconduct, but Sir John said the concealment of the advertising campaign was the most serious offence. Mr Green decided to resign the day after the auditor's report was put to him. He did not seek a redundancy deal or pay-off, and also paid back £291 in expenses and £3,461 for his furniture — which was returned to him.

Aide gets \$3m for life with Clinton

Stephanopoulos memoirs test legendary loyalty to Clinton

Martin Walker in Washington

GEORGE Stephanopoulos, the White House political aide, has sealed a record-breaking \$3 million (about £1.8 million) contract for a book of memoirs of life with Bill Clinton on the campaign trail and in the Oval Office, which will test his legendary reticence and loyalty to the president.

His agent who negotiated the deal, the super-lawyer Bob Barnett, put a high-minded spin on the contract yesterday. He said the book "will have lasting significance for people who care about and study the presidency".



George Stephanopoulos: 'I feel like I won the lottery'

House at the end of this month. Mr Stephanopoulos, who was educated at Oxford, has already put his inner-city Washington apartment on the market to prepare for his move to New York to join the long line of former political insiders who are heading for a new life in the media.

Arts G2 page 12. Fresh-faced youths with greater physiques than acting ability perform lachrymose melodrama. Plucky lesbians achieve wholeness through mutual hair-combing and warm humour. Genre pieces abound. Gay theatre is dead.

Something to appreciate. You only have to use a Fujitsu ErgoPro PC to appreciate the benefits of its ergonomic design and its superb manufactured quality. For example, you can now buy a 16Mb, 120 Mhz Fujitsu ErgoPro PC, complete with 14" screen and a 3 year warranty, for just £879 (£1032.83 inc VAT). Phone us now for more details. As you'll appreciate, these prices can't last forever!

Schools and rugby officials ponder landmark ruling

Rugby referee pays for injury

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

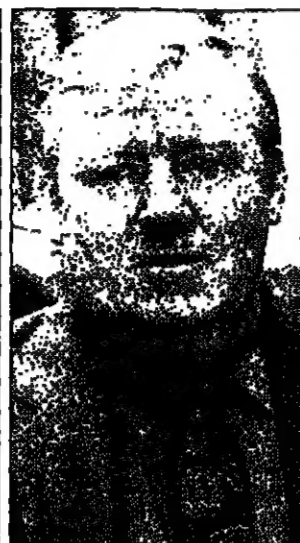
RUGBY Union officials and school heads were last night considering the implications of a Court of Appeal ruling that a referee was to blame for spinal injuries that condemned a 17-year-old player to a wheelchair for life.

The High Court made legal history last April when it held that referee Michael Nolan was liable for the injuries to Ben Smoldon, former captain of Sutton Coldfield Colts.

Mr Nolan appealed but three judges, headed by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, upheld Mr Justice Curtis's decision that he had fallen below the standards of a reasonably competent referee when controlling the scrummages during the match in which Mr Smoldon broke his neck.

The judges rejected as "unsustainable" an argument that Mr Smoldon, now aged 22, consented to the risk of injury by voluntarily playing a tough, highly physical game and was therefore not entitled to damages.

Lord Bingham said he had



Michael Nolan, who 'fell below the standards of a reasonably competent referee' in the match which left Ben Smoldon confined to a wheelchair for life



'This judgment has made a significant advance in providing for the safety of players, particularly young players. It is hoped that those who control and administer the laws of the sport will remember the judge's words that the referee owes the players under his control a preventive mantle'

Terry Lee, solicitor

consented to the ordinary incidents of a game of rugby, but could not possibly be said to have consented to a breach of duty on the part of the official whose duty it was to apply the rules.

Mr Nolan's insurers are to consider seeking leave to appeal to the House of Lords. Mr Smoldon has claimed £1 million compensation.

Neither Mr Nolan nor Mr Smoldon was in court yesterday. Mr Smoldon's solicitor, Terry Lee, said: "This judgment has made a significant advance in providing for the safety of players, particularly young players. It is hoped that those who control and administer the laws of the sport will remember the judge's words that the referee

owes the players under his control a 'preventive mantle'. Let us hope that this protective mantle is spread to reduce and eradicate the incidence of young people suffering severe spinal injuries while playing rugby."

Mr Nolan, 54, an army cadet force administrator from Tamworth, Staffs, had challenged Mr Justice Curtis's

ruling that he did not exercise reasonable care and skill in refereeing the scrums during the under-18s colts match in October 1981 between Sutton Coldfield and Burton on Trent. The case provoked fears that it would deter teachers from volunteering to referee school matches and make it more difficult for schools to get insurance. John

Sutton, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said after the ruling that heads would want to ensure that all matches were controlled in future by qualified referees.

But Lord Bingham said that Mr Justice Curtis had stressed that his decision was based on the special facts of the case, particularly the un-

acceptable number of collapsed scrums - between 18 and 24 - that were allowed to occur.

"He did not intend to open the door to a plethora of claims by players against referees, and it would be deplorable if that were the result," said Lord Bingham, sitting with Lord Justice Auld and Sir Brian Neill. Lord Bing-

ham said Mr Smoldon's capacity for independent and active life had been "blighted in the flower of his youth".

Mr Nolan was backed by the Rugby Football Union. A spokesman for its insurers' solicitors, Davies Arnold Cooper, said: "The scope of potential liability for sporting officials has today been greatly extended."

Galleries and museums defeat Sharon Stone in making hearts throb

Maew Kennedy
Heritage Correspondent

ROLL over Sharon Stone, here's something to make the heart beat faster and the pulses race: the British Dental Museum.

An experiment has proved scientifically that visiting museums is almost danger-

ously exciting, more exciting than watching Sharon Stone in Basic Instinct, Chelsea play Newcastle, video games, or even, astonishingly, watching Kenneth Clarke's Budget speech.

MAG, the London based Museums and Galleries magazine, sent off a young fit male guinea pig, tucked up to a portable heart-rate monitor

strapped to his chest, recording his normal heart rate and its response to stimuli like Ms Stone and Mr Clarke. The physical activity of visiting museums produced an average heart beat of 87, compared to a sedentary television watching average of 57, so the experiment plotted the leap in heart rate in direct response to an exotic museum display or a murder on film.

The X-certificate experience of the museums world is undoubtedly the Natural History Museum, specifically the Earthquake Experience in its new Earth Galleries, a recreation of a small Japanese supermarket in the grip of the Kobe earthquake, where the whole room shakes and shudders violently around the

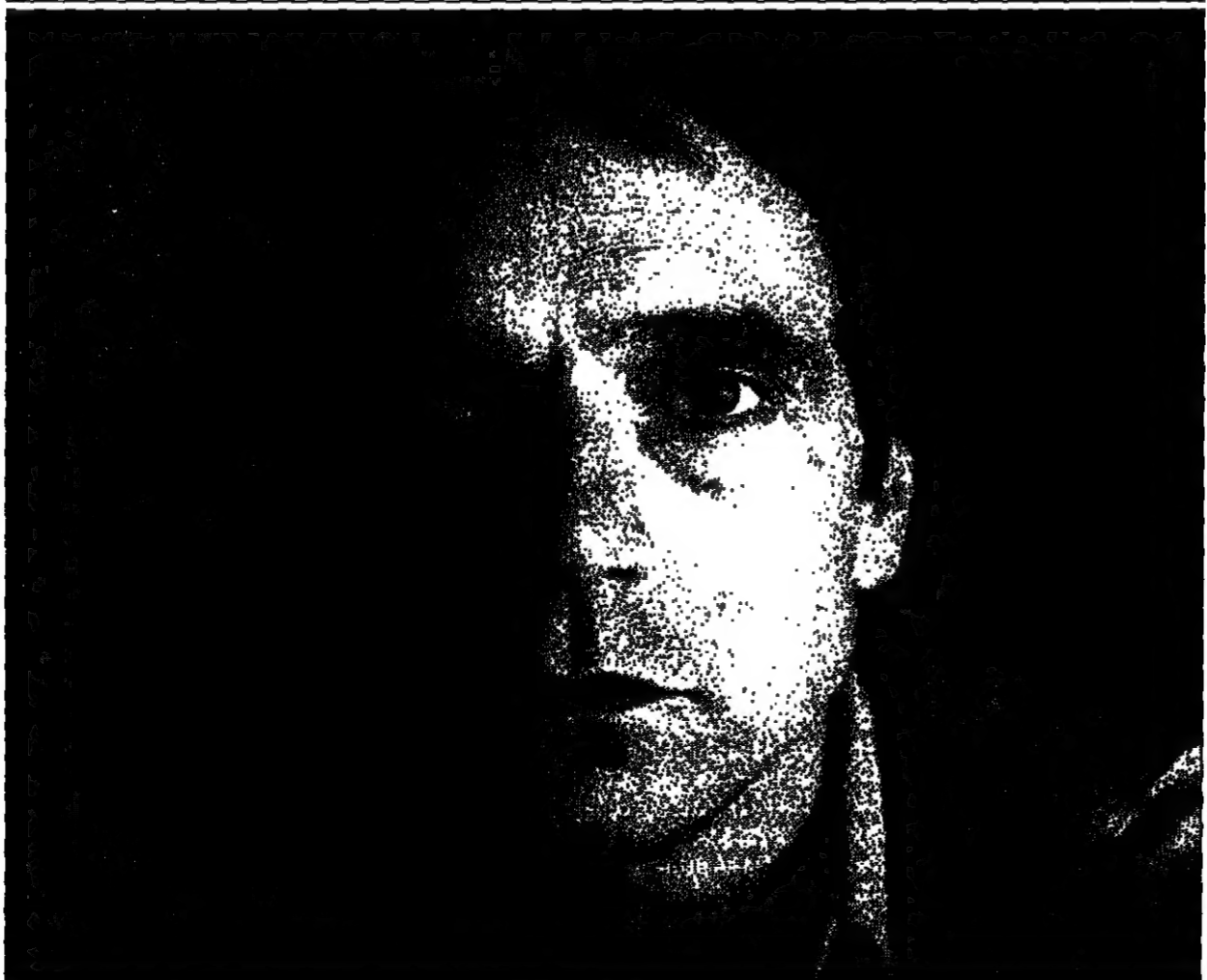
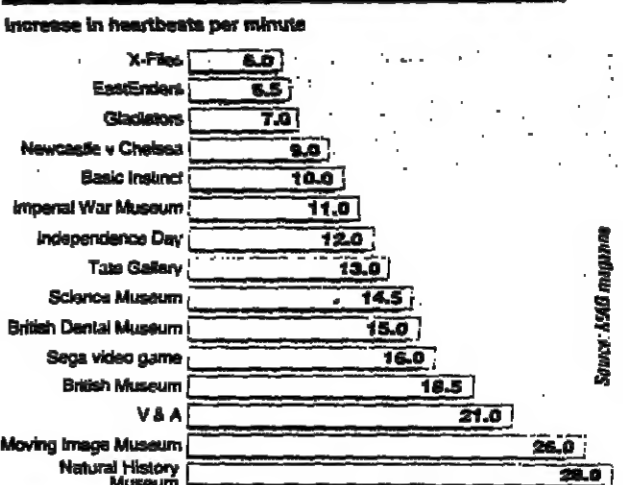
visitor.

More than the earth moved. Nothing, not Ms Stone's missing underpinnings, not Sega video games, not even the shooting of Ian Beale on Eastenders, could compete: the earthquake provoked a heart-beat rise of 28, compared with a rise of 10 for Basic Instinct. Chelsea v Newcastle, at nine points, were not in the same league.

The surprise thriller - though fear may have been the key - was the British Dental Association museum, which scored 13, the same as the Tate Gallery.

The Museum of the Moving Image was paring on the heels of the Natural History, scoring 26, followed by the restored Raphael Cartoon gallery at the Victoria and Al-

What makes your pulse beat faster?



Jeremy Irons: 'It will probably cause a lot of fuss when it comes out so I'll keep a low profile' PHOTOGRAPH: STEVE PYKE

Show Lolita or I'll quit UK, says Irons

Dan Gleister
Arts Correspondent

IN JUNE, Jeremy Irons sounded like the model of restraint. "This film is about what happens when a man, who is only attracted to young girls, meets a young girl with no morals. It will probably cause a lot of fuss when it comes out so I suppose I'll keep a low profile then."

Now, with the film remake of Lolita ready and looking for a distributor, Mr Irons has threatened to keep a very low profile indeed - by leaving the country.

"I don't believe that there is anything wrong with the movie," said the 46-year-old actor. "I have heard people say

that it will not get a distributor to release it. If it does not find one, I will leave the country."

The new film of Lolita by Adrian Lyne, director of Nine and A Half Weeks and Fatal Attraction, has had a troubled history even before its release.

The project lost Hollywood support when Oscar-winning producer Richard Zanuck pulled out before filming began.

One studio executive was quoted as saying: "Paedophilia is a tough sell, and somehow Zanuck's name took away some of the taint."

The film was eventually made by the French company Pathé for £30 million, with Irons playing the role filled by James Mason in the original Stanley Kubrick produc-

tion. The part of Lolita is played by 14-year-old American Dominique Swain.

Filming was completed six months ago, but the film still does not have a distributor in the US or Britain. The film comes soon after a tabloid outcry over David Cronenberg's film of the J G Ballard novel, Crash.

One reason for the film's problems is the current moral climate.

In the US, the movie provided fodder for the moral majority and the Republican candidate, Bob Dole, during the US presidential election. In Britain and the rest of Europe it has come under attack following the Belgian paedophile scandal.

One commentator wrote: "How can we react when we see the latest grotesque,

money-spinning scheme dreamed up by Hollywood? The movie moguls have done a remake of Lolita - a tale of twisted love and a man's lust for a mere child."

The new film, which few commentators have seen, is understood to be more explicit than the 1962 version which starred Sue Lyon as Lolita, and Peter Sellers alongside Mason.

Sex scenes for the new film have reportedly been shot using an adult double for Lolita.

But the film's scriptwriter, Stephen Schiff, denied that the sex was gratuitous.

"Sex is shown in a way that is relevant to the story and not for the sake of stimulating filthy minds. This is not a sex film," he said.

Jury in Leah trial fails to agree

Kamran Ahmed

THE jury in the trial of Steven Packman, accused of being involved in the supply of ecstasy which killed Leah Betts, was dismissed yesterday after failing to reach a verdict.

The six men and six women had deliberated for more than seven hours over two days at Norwich crown court. Mr Justice Kay told the jury: "Nobody has changed their minds from yesterday. It is unrealistic to take a decision now." Leah died after taking

an ecstasy tablet at her 18th birthday party in Litchingford, Essex.

The Crown Prosecution Service will decide whether to apply for a retrial on Friday, when Mr Justice Kay will hear submissions from the prosecution and defence.

Packman, aged 18, of Laindon, near Basildon, Essex, was accused of being involved in supplying Leah in November last year. Stephen Smith, aged 19, also of Laindon, has admitted the charge. He will be dealt with later.

Leah fell into a coma after taking the ecstasy, which

caused a partial kidney failure.

Her body could not cope with the water she was drinking.

Her death sparked a media-led campaign against ecstasy, and led her parents to launch a nationwide effort to persuade teenagers not to take the drug.

Leah's father, Paul Betts, said yesterday: "Of course we wanted this to come to an end here but we will now have to continue our wait. It is heartrending."

"We thought that at last we could close a chapter here and

get this part of it out of the way before Christmas, but we know now we will have to go through it all again in the new year."

The Packman family said in a statement made through defence counsel John Cooper: "The prosecution must consider what interest will be served by a retrial. Mr Packman has always said he is innocent of these charges and continues to say he is innocent."

"He and his family go into Christmas determined that if there is to be another trial the truth is heard."

Using toes as fingers gives children new grip on life

Tim Radford
Science Editor

THREE years ago Stacey Carter-Brooks of York wouldn't play with other children. When she did, she kept one hand concealed: two of her fingers were missing.

Now, at 10, she has five fingers on each hand. She is, however, missing a second toe on each foot. Stacey is one of 40 children with congenital or accidental deformities of the hand whose lives have been made better by Simon Kay and his team of surgeons at St James's university hospital in Leeds.

Mr Kay reported in the Journal of Hand Surgery yesterday that 66 toes in all were transferred, and one year after surgery 37 of the 40 children could move the new finger. All believed their hands were more useful. In no case did the operation undermine the child's happiness or confidence. It is not a new technique, but members of the British Society for Surgery of the Hand want to see more of it.

"The time to get excited about something is when you can prove it works," said

David Evans of the Royal National Orthopaedic hospital.

One quarter of all accidents at home or work involve hands. There are thought to be 50,000 operations to injured hands, and 75,000 "selective" operations to the hands or upper limbs in Britain each year. Yet Mr Evans said, there were probably 10 to 15 full-time hand surgeons in the country. He argued that there should be at least one in every hospital, working with a surgeon with a strong interest in the art.

"We calculate we need at least 100 surgeons working with hands," he said.

Operations to transfer toes to hands can take up to eight hours. Using microscopes, teams have to attach nerves, tendons and blood vessels. Some of the transplanted toes can provide a grip or pinching power to what might be an otherwise useless limb.

Transplanted toes grow normally; the joint movements are not as flexible as fingers would be, and the nails are smaller. "But surprisingly they don't look as much like toes as one might expect," Mr Evans said.

Blair tells music press of 'free and frank debate' on Spice Girls

Stuart Muller

WHEN the Spice Girls declared themselves the new Thatcherites and denounced Tony Blair's haircut, it looked as if the Labour leader's bid for pop respectability had failed. But now he has opened a new front in his fight to appeal to the youth generation by making a guest appearance in the Christmas edition of NME.

Observers will be surprised to learn that the main topic of conversation in the Blair household has been none other than Britain's most popular all-girl act. In an eclectic list of his top 10 tracks of the year - which cynics have suggested was more likely to have been penned by one of his fresh-faced assistants - Mr Blair appears to put principle before party by including the Spice Girls hit Say You'll Be There.

"Great pop record," he writes. "There has been free and frank debate in the Blair household as to our favourite Spice Girl."

In what could be a rehearsal for a Blair government's new year honours list,

Tony's top 10

THE Ghost of Tom Joad - Bruce Springsteen
Three Lions - The Lightning Seeds featuring David Baddiel and Frank Skinner
Don't Look Back in Anger - Oasis
Ironic - Alanis Morissette
Hallo Spaceboy - David Bowie and the Pet Shop Boys
Say You'll Be There - Spice Girls
Ready or Not - Fugees
A Whiter Shade of Pale - Annie Lennox
Angel - Simply Red
Rotterdam - The Beautiful South

he rewards the loyalty of other acts with a mention in his top 10. On Oasis' Don't Look Back in Anger, he writes: "I couldn't not choose an Oasis song this year. They've all been very vocal in their support - especially Noel."

Simply Red's Mick Hucknall, another prominent Labour supporter, also comes in for high praise.

صحنه من الاله

No cheer for Hogg on beef ban

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Ewen MacAskill

DOUGLAS Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, failed to win any guarantees about an early lifting of the European union's export ban on British beef when he met fellow agriculture ministers in Brussels yesterday.

After Mr Hogg gave details of the revised cull of up to 100,000 extra cattle in silence, there were immediate warnings that the ban is unlikely to be relaxed before next summer, after the general election. Ivan Yates, the Irish farms minister chairing the agriculture ministers' council, told BBC radio that a lifting of the ban could not be predicted with certainty. He said: "We're talking about mid-year before perhaps the full inspection process could be complete and early decisions could be made around the mid-year of 1997."

Earlier Mr Hogg claimed Britain had met four of the five conditions laid down at the Florence summit and should be treated sympathetically and rapidly by the EU. Other member states welcomed Britain's climbdown. But it is clear that the process of giving British herds a clean bill of health will be a lengthy one, with the Government required to produce proposals which will be studied before clearance by EU scientific and veterinary committees, followed by inspections to

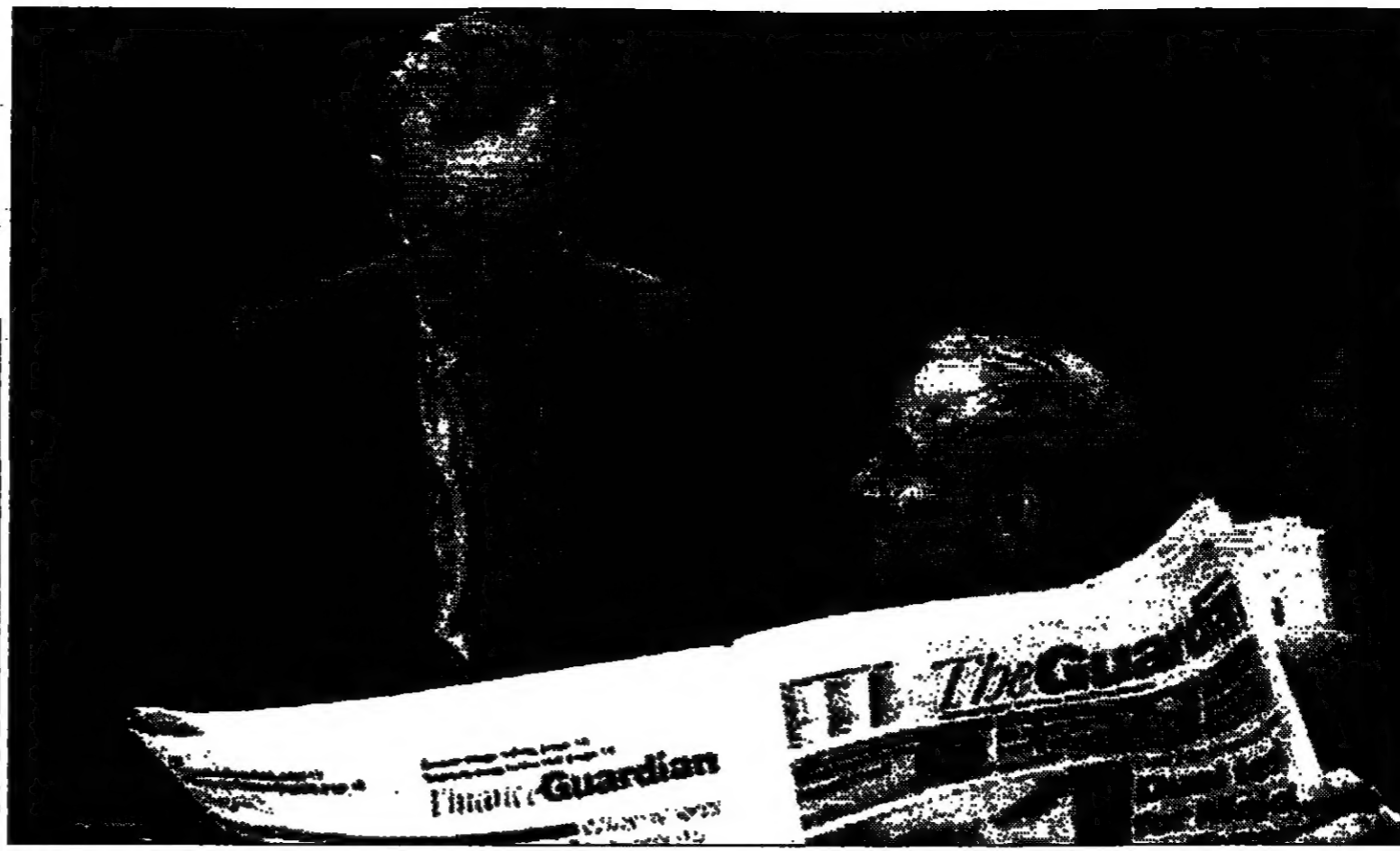
check on the operation of the cull. Other agriculture ministers expressed reservations about how quickly the ban might be lifted, with Josias Van Aartsen, the Dutch agriculture minister, who will chair ministerial meetings in the new year, saying he anticipated talks continuing throughout the six months of his country's presidency.

Franz Fischer, the agriculture commissioner, told the French newspaper *Le Monde* in an interview: "It is clear that serious mistakes have been committed in Great Britain. These mistakes are not so much in the health measures but in the way they have been carried out and checked."

In the Commons, John Major admitted he could not provide a timetable for lifting of the beef ban, after Tony Blair reminded him that he had said at the Florence summit in June it would be lifted by November, and had failed to deliver.

The Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, had to intervene during noisy exchanges when Mr Major used "unparliamentary" language to accuse Mr Blair of "misleading" the Commons. He then accused the Labour leader of "misunderstanding" the beef crisis.

Mr Major said: "The beef ban will be lifted by our European partners and I cannot tell you precisely by what date that will be. I will be seeking the lifting of the ban progressively as soon as possible."



The Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, (left), during a break in talks with fellow farm ministers in Brussels yesterday

Straw backs stalker bill

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

LABOUR denied last night that it would do anything to delay the speedy progress of legislation through the Commons to tackle stalking.

The Protection From Harassment Bill is expected to complete its Commons stages today, move on to the Lords and become law early in the new year.

The shadow home secretary, Jack Straw, rejected reports that he would renege on a promise to help speed the bill through. At the start of yesterday's second reading debate, the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, said he was "mystified" that Labour had put down amendments which would "significantly weaken the effect" of the bill. Mr Straw replied: "We support this measure, although we wish to see it improved in committee."

An attempt by a Tory backbencher to bring back caring in schools failed last night to pass its first Commons hurdle.

James Pawsey (Rugby and Kenilworth) withdrew his amendment to the Government's Education Bill after it became clear it would not be passed by the Commons committee examining through the measure. He said later he would bring back the amendment when the bill comes before the full House for its report stage in the new year.

Heseltine fails to back up claims of Labour leaks culture in Whitehall

Richard Norton-Taylor

THE deputy prime minister, Michael Heseltine, has been unable to substantiate claims that a spate of Whitehall leaks were the result of politically-motivated Labour supporters in the Civil Service.

Mr Heseltine told MPs last week that a network of civil servants, including Labour

candidates, had disclosed damaging documents in what he called a "leak culture" in Whitehall. He told the Commons public service committee that he had prepared a "folder of the leaks" which he promised to pass to the MPs.

The Guardian has learned that a Cabinet Office report sent to the committee yesterday — a week after Mr Heseltine made his allegations —

says there is no evidence to support his claims. It also suggests that despite Mr Heseltine's references to a new leak culture in the Civil Service, there has been no more leaks from Whitehall in recent weeks than there were in the mid-1980s.

Mr Heseltine indicated last week that his folder included newspaper reports of a leaked Treasury document on the

future of the welfare state which also included the possibility of privatising roads. A member of the Treasury unit which wrote the report was quoted as having sought a nomination as a Labour candidate.

The Cabinet Office report says that the official — Helen Goodman, who later withdrew her candidature — had been cleared of any involve-

ment in the leak. John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, last night reminded Mr Heseltine that he had not replied to a challenge to name names and place his evidence immediately into the public domain.

Sir Robin Butler, cabinet secretary and head of the Civil Service will appear before the public service committee today.

'Old Labour' MEP irks leadership

Stephen Bates on fierce party critic who is not just a far-left stereotype

HUGH Kerr, the 52-year-old Labour MEP now threatened with deselection, has been an irritant to the party leadership ever since he was elected to the European Parliament in 1994, following many years as a councillor at Harlow in Essex.

He is an almost archetypal Old Labour figure — a bearded, middle-aged, former lecturer in social policy at what is now North London University.

The language he has used to attack the Labour leadership has been robust and unconstructed too. Tony Blair — described ironically as the Great Leader — is frequently attacked for what he is doing to the party, but so are figures like Clare Short (for her "hatchet job" on Liz Davies, the Islington councillor prevented from being a parliamentary candidate) and Robin Cook.

"Is there no depth to which the Labour leadership will not stoop in its pursuit of power?" he asked in a letter to the Guardian last May.

"Whatever happened to the notion that political parties are meant to educate and lead public opinion and not reflect reaction, prejudice and chauvinism?"

The issues have been key-stone ones, such as opposition to the reform of Clause 4. His local party at Harlow was criticised by Labour headquarters as "political dinosaurs" for voting against the change of the constitution on a show of hands rather than by consulting the full membership.

He also opposed Labour's consultation process on the party manifesto. Although almost all of the surrounding Westminster constituencies have Tory MPs, he won the European election for the Essex West and Hertfordshire East seat by a wafer-thin margin of 3,067 votes.

Mr Kerr, Scots-born but Essex educated, admits he used to be a member of the Trotskyite International Socialists but has also been a Labour Party member since 1959.

Tory candidate and lobbyist faces US drink-drive charge

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

FLAMBOYANT black Tory candidate and lobbyist, Derek Laud, could be facing prison rather than standing for Parliament next May following drink-driving charges being brought against him in the US.

The fox-hunting, Monday Club member who is challenging Bernie Grant for the safe Labour seat of Tottenham in north London, has been asked to appear before East Hampton town justice court in Long Island on January 30 to answer charges of driving while intoxicated, driving while unlicensed and falling to keep to the right side of the road. The maximum sentence is one year's imprisonment.

The charges follow an accident at 3am last August when a car said to be driven by Mr Laud was in collision with another car which led to four people being taken to hospital.

According to the East Hampton Star, the local Long Island newspaper, Mr Laud was arrested and not released until he posted \$1,000 bail.

Mr Laud, who runs the political division of Ludgate Laud, the lobbying company, advised Premier Club chairman, John Beckwith in his failed bid for Ministry of Defence homes this year. His company's consultants include Michael Colvin, Conservative MP for Romsey.

Mr Laud is also a close friend of former Tory whip, Michael Brown, and of Christine and Neil Hamilton, MP — the latter under investigation for the "cash for questions" affair.

Dixons

FREE COLOUR PRINTER

WITH SELECTED PACKARD BELL PCS

OLIVETTI JP700 COLOUR INKJET PRINTER
IN-STORE PRICE £159.99

PLUS 12 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION* ON ALL PCs

MULTIMEDIA PENTIUM P100 PC FOR ONLY £949

ACER

ACROS PENTIUM® P100 MULTIMEDIA PC

- 100MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb RAM.
- 650Mb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- LARGER STORAGE MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION*

Price £999. **£949**

Packard Bell

9001S P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 1Gb hard drive.
- 6-speed CD-ROM drive.

Was £1499. **£1399**

apricot

MSS40/16Mb P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 16Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 28.8 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.
- ATI 3D Page Graphics.
- CD-ROM drive.

Was £1799. **£1699**

apricot

M8940 P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

apricot

M8540/16Mb P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 16Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1799. **£1699**

Packard Bell

8002 P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

Packard Bell

8002E P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

Packard Bell

8002S P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

Packard Bell

8002E P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

Packard Bell

8002S P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

Packard Bell

8002E P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 8Mb EDO RAM.
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM drive.
- 33.6 bps modem.
- 15" monitor.

Was £1499. **£1399**

COMPAQ

4118 P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 16Mb EDO RAM (expandable to 72Mb).
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM.
- 33.6 bps fax/modem.
- Easy access buttons.

Was £1799. **£1599**

COMPAQ

4118 P120 PENTIUM® MULTIMEDIA PC

- 120MHz Intel Pentium® processor.
- 16Mb EDO RAM (expandable to 72Mb).
- 12Gb hard drive.
- 8-speed CD-ROM.
- 33.6 bps fax/modem.
- Easy access buttons.

Was £1799. **£1599**

IT'S A CRACKER

A Corby Trouser Press is an inspired Christmas gift. It makes both giver and receiver look good.

Choose from a range of models and finishes starting from around £75.

CORBY TROUSER PRESS

ALWAYS READ: BENTON & BOWLES, BURNETT DOWNEY, HILL & KNOWLTON, JAGGERS, LEWIS & CLARK, MCGEE & CO, MCDONNELL & LEWIS, MILES & FOSTER, JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP, SLD/ROGERS & CO FOR OTHER STOCKISTS CALL FREE 0800 229 351

This judgment has made a significant advance in protecting the safety of players... particularly young players. It is hoped that those who control and administer the laws of the sport will remember the justice's words that the referees were the players under the control of preventive discipline.

Israelis and Arafat await 'the explosion'

A bloody clash between the peace 'partners' seems certain, Shyam Bhatia in Jerusalem writes

FEARS are growing that a bloody confrontation between Israel and the Palestinians is inevitable, despite Benjamin Netanyahu's public commitment to pursue the peace process.

At closed-door briefings in the Israeli prime minister's office and among Yasser's Arafat's entourage, officials agree it is not whether but when the clash takes place.

"We're sitting on a powder keg," said an Israeli official. "There is no way to prevent the big explosion." In Gaza, a top adviser to Mr Arafat said: "We're waiting for the match that will ignite the fire. It can happen any minute, any hour, any day. All it takes is one provocation by Netanyahu."

In 1997 a traffic accident in which four Arab labourers were crushed to death by an Israeli lorry sparked off widespread riots that developed into the intifada.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip once again represent a potential tinderbox. If anything, the political climate among the Palestinians is even more poisoned.

Since Mr Netanyahu's election, Israel's relationship with its Palestinian neighbours has deteriorated to a point that would have been inconceivable six months ago. Mr Netanyahu's Likud Party believes that the West Bank, which it refers to by its biblical names of Judea and Samaria, is an integral part of Israel. The Oslo peace pact, the party stalwarts argue, will eventually terminate Israel's presence in the West Bank and lead to the creation of another hostile Arab neighbour, called Palestine.

In recent months there have been almost daily confrontations between Jews and Arabs in the fields and villages away from the big urban centres of the West Bank. In some instances Mr Arafat's ministers have personally led protest marches against Israel's policies, or lain down in front of bulldozers preparing sites for more Jewish homes.

Earlier this week, the Speaker of the Palestinian legislative council, Ahmed Qreia, responded to the Israeli government's decision to strengthen Jewish settlements by warning: "Never has the peace process been in such a critical situation."

Mr Qreia said the Palestinians would not hesitate to demand the return of former Arab cities like Haifa, Jaffa and Safed if the stalemate continued.

Palestinian officials complain most about the snail-like progress of the talks on Hebron. For six months Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have been unable to reach an agreement that would allow the Israeli army to leave the city.

Mr Netanyahu's closest advisers say he missed an opportunity to ditch the Oslo deal after September's bloody clashes over the opening of the Hasmonaean tunnel in Jerusalem.

At last Friday's cabinet meeting in Jerusalem the head of Israel's Shin Bet security force, Ami Ayalon, reported that Mr Arafat and his Palestinian Authority were preparing to unleash a wave of violence. That evening, Israeli television revealed that Mr Netanyahu had angrily rejected Admiral Ayalon's warning that the government's policies were set on a collision course.

Adm Ayalon's report followed leaks by top Israeli officials that the Palestinian police had purchased anti-missile, and that Mr Arafat was preparing an underground bunker for himself in Gaza City. Palestinian officials claim that these leaks were intended to prepare the Israeli public for an "all-out war" against the Palestinians.

On Friday, the Palestinians have called for a massive public demonstration in Arab East Jerusalem to protest at Israel's decision to build 122 Jewish homes in the Arab enclave of Ras al Amoud.

The Palestinians have been encouraged by growing international pressure on Mr Netanyahu that included an appeal from three former United States secretaries of state, who criticised Israel's decision to expand settlements.

President Bill Clinton stepped up the pressure when he described Israel's settlement policy as an obstacle to peace, and urged a rapid agreement on Israel's withdrawal from Hebron.

Palestinian fears for peace were reflected in last Saturday's Al Ayyam newspaper, the official mouthpiece of the Palestinian Authority. Its verdict: "Oslo died the day Netanyahu was elected."

'We're sitting on a powder keg. There's no way to prevent the blast'

ground bunker for himself in Gaza City. Palestinian officials claim that these leaks were intended to prepare the Israeli public for an "all-out war" against the Palestinians.

On Friday, the Palestinians have called for a massive public demonstration in Arab East Jerusalem to protest at Israel's decision to build 122 Jewish homes in the Arab enclave of Ras al Amoud.

The Palestinians have been encouraged by growing international pressure on Mr Netanyahu that included an appeal from three former United States secretaries of state, who criticised Israel's decision to expand settlements.

President Bill Clinton stepped up the pressure when he described Israel's settlement policy as an obstacle to peace, and urged a rapid agreement on Israel's withdrawal from Hebron.

Palestinian fears for peace were reflected in last Saturday's Al Ayyam newspaper, the official mouthpiece of the Palestinian Authority. Its verdict: "Oslo died the day Netanyahu was elected."

Finn wins Santa war by a beard



Jon Henley in Rovaniemi, Finland

NORWAY is convinced he's Norwegian. "We've carried out extensive investigations, and there can be no doubt — he was born here," said Kjerseth Engen of the Norwegian Tourist Board. "It's because of Spitzbergen, you see. There's a direct link to the North Pole."

Try telling that to the Swedes. "Of course he lives here — it's a well-known, internationally documented fact," said Lars Liljegren, his Swedish business manager. "He gets 150,000

letters a year and 120,000 visitors. We should know, we market him in Japan." Greenland begs to differ: it receives grants from the Danish government to promote itself as his only home. Even the Icelanders get proprietorial about him, although they are hampered by an ancient Icelandic legend which says he comes in 13 incarnations, all with unpronounceable names.

But Arto Tuominen thinks they are all wrong. In the Great Nordic Santa War — waged with unlikely passion and even unlikelier sums of money by marketing men, foreign ministries, tourist boards, Santa villages and Santa post offices in five quiet and peace-loving countries — a clear victor has emerged.

"Of course, it is a very competitive sector these days," said Mr Tuominen, managing director of Santa Claus Finland International Ltd. "But I think we can say that the number one position of the world's only genuine Santa —

Finland's — has strengthened substantially. You only have to look at the figures."

Santa's main post office in the small town of Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland, has received 700,000 letters this year. Mr Tuominen said — 300,000 more than last year, and they are still coming in at between 20,000 and 30,000 a day.

"We should hit a million by the end of the year," he said. "That'll be about twice as many as Norway, Sweden and Greenland combined. And it's not as if we go round the world telling people Santa lives in Finland — they just seem to know."

Finland's Santa also gets almost twice as many visitors as his nearest rival in Drobak, outside Oslo.

This year's celebrity guests — not too old to tell Santa what they really, really want — were the teen pop idols the Spice Girls. But each year more than 400,000 others make the pilgrimage to his Arctic Circle



Hot line to the North Pole: There's only one Santa, says the favourite in Rovaniemi

here," Mr Tuominen said. "What we have is a serious supply problem."

This week, the man at the centre of it all sat in a new and larger office, complete with viewing platform for timid guests, digital camera for instant sat-on-the-lap pictures, video-conferencing facilities and a volume titled A Guide to the World's Chimneys.

He was not interested in the Nordic Santa War. "You people only ever want the behind-the-mask stuff, and it's humbug," he said. In between a *bonjour* to Antoine from Paris, a *kallimera* to Constantine from Greece, and a lot of yo-ho-hoing to 150 British tourists on a five-day Winter Wonderland-Search for Santa package with Cosmos.

"Look, there's only one Santa, he's the one in children's hearts. It's not my business to go around breaking children's dreams."

His postbag made his point. Many letters were a forthright demand for the

goodies. Warren, aged six, from Leytonstone, listed 38 presents including a Shaving Ken, a Robocop car, skates (size 13) and a laptop computer.

But Natty, from Thailand, wanted her 14 sleek cats to get better. Yoshiko from Japan implored: "Please listen I'm falling in love now, but he thinks of me as just a friend. Santa Claus, please send me a miracle."

Katerina from Moscow wanted nothing more than "to play snowballs together. Class 1C from Sofia, Bulgaria, said Santa Claus should know he was "the biggest magic for us, because you make us kind".

Outside, stamping their feet in the snow to keep warm in -16C, the crowd of excited children were not interested in supply and demand.

Matthew Weeks, aged nine, from Welwyn, spoke for them. This one, he said, was real. You could tell because he lived so far away, and had such a big beard.

"I'm about as insecure as you are. I'm exactly 39 steps — to use one of my favourite authors — from a double-decker bus, same as you."

Felix Dennis

G2 cover story

NOTICE OF VARIATION OF INTEREST RATES

With effect from 1 January 1997 Mortgage Rate will increase to 7.25% per annum for both existing and new borrowers.

The 100% Mortgage Rate will also increase to 7.75% per annum, along with the Royal Premier Mortgage Rate to 6.50%, with effect from this date.

Existing arrangements apply for Centralised Mortgage Services customers.



The Royal Bank of Scotland plc. Registered Office: 36 St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh EH2 2YB. Registered in Scotland No. 90312.



Snow hits the hot asphalt as a construction crew pave a parking lot in Kokomo, Indiana, causing clouds of steam

PHOTOGRAPH: LYNNE KASEY

News in brief

Saddam's son on television

President Saddam Hussein's elder son Uday, who was shot and wounded last week, appeared on Iraqi television yesterday speaking at ease with a Qatari envoy and a reporter from the official news agency.

Flanked by bouquets, Uday was covered with a blanket and there were no bandages on his face. — Reuter.

Border tightened

The biggest group of defectors to flee North Korea gave a first news conference in Seoul yesterday saying the impoverished country and nearby tripled guards along its borders with China and Russia to stop people escaping. — Reuter.

Lebed wins suit

The ousted Russian security chief, Alexander Lebed, won his libel suit in Moscow yesterday against the interior minister, Anatoly Kulikov, who had accused him of planning a coup, and was awarded the symbolic damages he sought: a single roose. — AP.

Shuttle on beach

Two large chunks of the space shuttle Challenger washed up on the Florida shore yesterday nearly 11 years after it exploded, killing all seven crew members. — AP.

Cypriot doubts

A British proposal for ending the stalemate between Greeks and Turks on divided Cyprus did not go far enough to justify direct talks between the rival communities, Cyprus said yesterday. — Reuter.

Air crash toll 17

Seventeen people were killed when a military plane crashed while taking off from an airport near the city of Fakov, north-western Russia, yesterday. — Reuter.

Turkey steps up mafia inquiry

Chris Murtial in Ankara

TURKEY'S president, Suleyman Demirel, has ordered the acceleration of an official investigation into a case linking the state with organised crime, which is rapidly becoming the biggest political scandal in the history of the republic.

The media, helped by leaked documents, have driven the inquiry with daily revelations — described by the opposition as like 100 water-gates — surrounding a car crash.

The lorry driver who pulled out in front of a Mercedes travelling at an estimated 135mph near the town of Susurluk on November 3 is on trial for careless driving. But many Turks see him as a national hero for what he unwittingly helped uncover.

The car was ripped open as it slid under the lorry, killing a police academy chairman and a wanted gangster and his moll, and seriously injuring a senior politician. A cache of guns, silencers and surveillance equipment, and traces of cocaine, were found. The state was caught in *flagrante delicto* with organised crime.

Last week a prosecutor asked the justice ministry to lift the parliamentary immunity of Mehmet Agar, who was forced to resign as

where he was being held for heroin smuggling.

According to leaked intelligence documents, he worked for the government, killing leftwing extremists and Kurdish separatists and taking part in a failed coup in Azerbaijan in 1994. A diplomatic passport and false identity cards were found in the car.

He was given a virtual state

directed by senior police were involved in killings, extortion and drug smuggling.

"Murderers are working for the state," Mr Demirel told the prime minister in a confidential letter. He has called a summit of party leaders on Sunday to discuss political corruption.

The new interior minister, Meral Akseener, has suspended the Istanbul police chief, his deputy, the head of special operations and three police officers during an investigation. The three officers allegedly confessed to killing a casino boss in July. They were merely reassigned as bodyguards to the MP who survived the car crash.

He is Sedat Bucak, a Kurdish warlord who received 270,000 a month from the government to fight rival Kurdish separatists. Human rights activists say gangsters and Kurdish tribal chiefs controlled by the state could be responsible for more than 1,300 unsolved extrajudicial killings since 1992.

'Murderers are working for the state' President Demirel wrote to the PM

interior minister within days of the accident.

A police report said he had signed a gun licence found on the body of the dead gangster, Abdullah Catil. Mr Agar says the signature is a fake.

Catil was wanted for torture and murder of seven leftwing students in 1978 and was implicated in the 1981 assassination attempt on the Pope. In 1990 he was helped to escape from a Swiss prison

general, his coffin draped in a flag. The deputy prime minister, Tanusu Ciller, caused a furor with her valediction: "We will always respectfully remember those who fire bullets or suffer wounds in the name of this country."

The opposition leader, Mesut Yilmaz, who was punched by a rightwing nationalist for pursuing the Susurluk affair, has supplied evidence that up to 120 people

Saudis bar Britons from leaving

Ian Black Diplomatic Editor

SAUDI ARABIA is preventing at least 20 Britons from leaving the country because of an investigation into the murder of an Australian nurse at a Dhahran hospital.

The Britons, along with some 40 other Westerners, including Canadians, Australians and Americans, are being denied their passports by the authorities, sources at the King Fahd military hospital said last night. Many have been questioned by Saudi police.

But the Britons have not had any assistance from the Foreign Office: the British consul in Riyadh, Tim Lamb, was yesterday denied entry to the hospital after his Canadian and Australian counterparts visited.

The Foreign Office said it was looking into the case.

"What concerns us is that we are being held against our will," complained one British employee who missed a flight home on Monday. "They are

refusing to release our passports. The chances of getting on another flight before Christmas are nil."

The British authorities should be questioning why people are being held and why they're not being eliminated," from the investigation.

Yvonne Gilford, aged 56, was found dead in suspicious circumstances. Australian press reports have said she was suffocated, stabbed and hit with a hammer. Other terrified nurses locked themselves in their rooms.

Hospital employees were told last night that they were not to walk outside the compound after sundown, for fear the killer is still at large. A Filipino nurse was stabbed to death in 1994 but that case was never solved.

Saudi Arabia is sensitive about dealing with Western expatriates because of the strict application of Islamic law. Relations with Britain were scarred in the late 1970s over the case of Helen Smith, a British nurse who was killed during a party in Jeddah.

Court heeds Pope's plea

Richard Thomas in Washington

THE United States supreme court yesterday ordered a last-minute stay of execution for a convicted Virginia murderer after a worldwide campaign for clemency led by the Pope.

Virginia's governor, George Allen, had earlier dismissed what he called "a write-in by the Pope", and reiterated his determination to punish "violent, premeditated, heinous vile crimes" by death.

Joseph O'Dell, who was convicted of rape and murder, had been scheduled to die by lethal injection last night.

But the supreme court said in a short statement that the execution should be delayed, pending a review of O'Dell's appeal, which presented new DNA-based evidence that blood on his clothes did not match the blood of the victim, a 44-year-old woman who was raped and killed in February 1985.

Legal experts said that a decision on O'Dell's case was now unlikely to be finalised before the New Year.

Mr Allen continued to insist yesterday that even the Pope had no sway over his determination to proceed with the execution, although he said that he would wait for clearer guidance from the supreme court justices.

"I give just as much attention to people who don't have the Pope writing in as to some body who does have the Pope writing in," Mr Allen had told a press conference held before the supreme court's intervention.

Front-page coverage of the impending execution in Italy prompted the Italian prime minister, Romano Prodi, to respond yesterday with a letter to Mr Allen seeking a suspension.

Interviews with Italian journalists in which O'Dell protested his innocence — as well as asking for a sample of his sperm to be frozen ahead of the execution — have also fuelled interest in the case.

Linda Thurston, director of Amnesty International's programme to abolish the death penalty, said: "We don't decide to intervene in this case, but it certainly helps. The court is supposed to be impartial, but politics inevitably plays a part."

But Amnesty was concerned that the international movement to save O'Dell — which was orchestrated by Virginia pressure groups over the Internet — should not pick and choose individual cases, given that 3,000 people are on death row in the US.

The Vatican said the pontiff's plea on behalf of O'Dell was a simple attempt to save a life, but the wider impact on the world's estimated 1 billion Catholics is potentially enormous, pressure groups said.

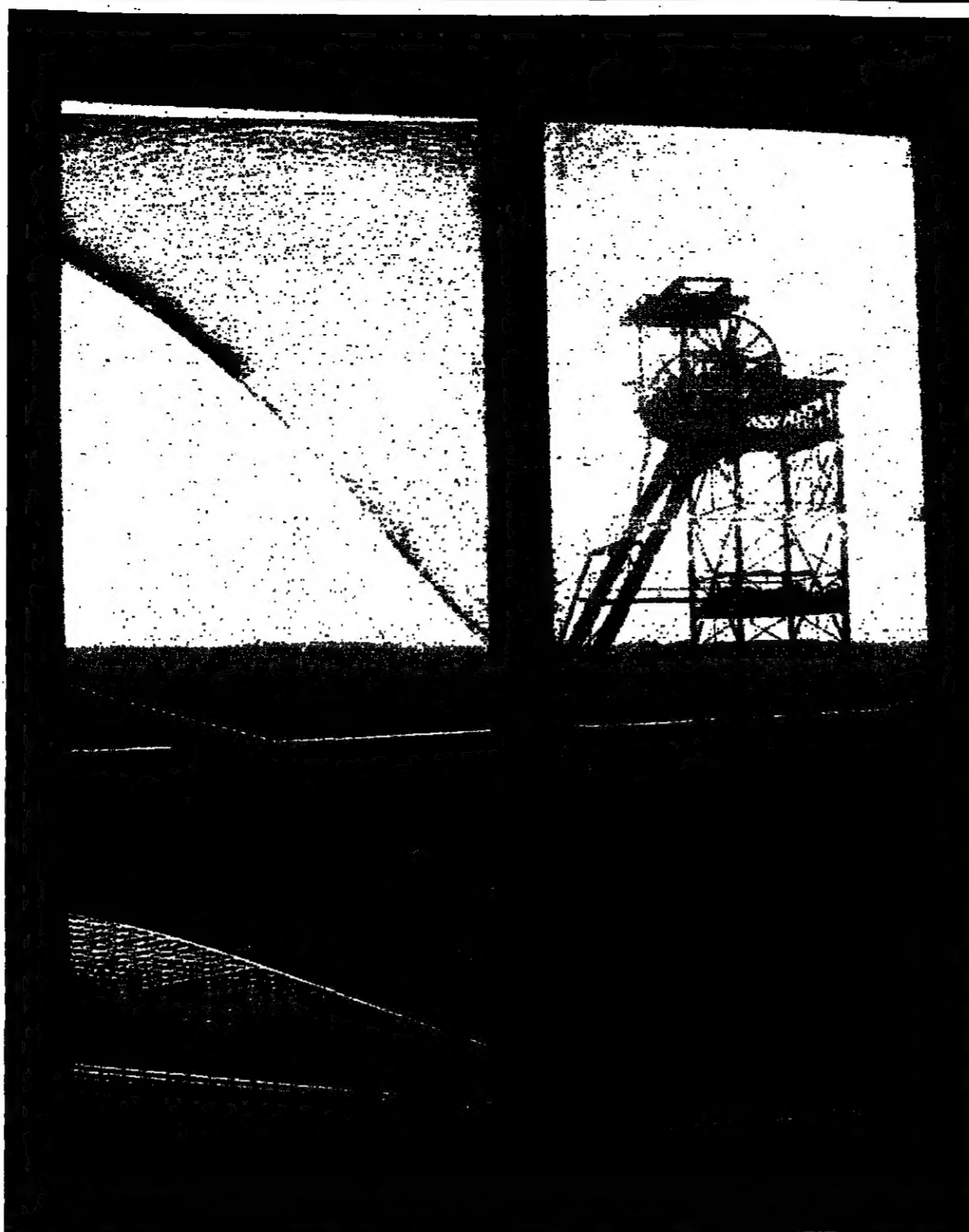
In his annual message of peace, released ahead of delivery on January 1, the Pope called yesterday for a new climate of forgiveness.

Although his remarks addressed the need to prevent worldwide conflicts, anti-death penalty campaigners seized on his comments as an implicit criticism of state-sponsored killing.

صلى الله عليه وسلم



An alternative power structure has emerged in poverty stricken Western Siberia to co-ordinate protests and put pressure on Moscow. James Meek reports from the mining town of Prokopyevsk, where workers have not been paid for at least six months



A galloping programme of pit closures has sucked Prokopyevsk and its people dry

'Town of slaves' seeks salvation

"DON'T like coming here," said Sergei as the car dipped into the hollows of the town, and dark hunched figures in shabby coats lumbered between embankments of snow like Lowry figures on white paper. "This is a town of slaves." If Sergei, making a good living as a black-market metals trader and paying taxes only to the mob, is troubled by anything, it should be by the town of Prokopyevsk. While Russia's new rich has grown, the mining community of a quarter of a million people has been abandoned to fend for itself in the frozen expanse of Siberia amid ruthless and chaotic spending cuts and pit closures. But its desperate, unpaid citizens are not going quietly. In a move reminiscent of the creation of workers' and soldiers' soviets which preceded the 1917 revolution, they have set up a "salvation committee" to co-ordinate protests and take the initiative from the ineffectual local authorities. "It's like Lenin said: if the authorities can't govern in a new way, and the masses do not want to live in the old way, a third force appears," said Valery Zuyev, aged 42, a mine electrician who heads the salvation committee. The committee movement, which began in September, has spread to other towns in the Kuzbass region. There have been calls to buy weapons and Moscow is worried. Unlike the strikes by unpaid miners and teachers, the committees unite workers from all sectors. "If they drive you into a



Unpaid Siberian miners are turning to new 'salvation committees' instead of ineffective strikes

corner, if your children are hungry, if the constitution isn't respected, the only thing is to demand the government be changed," said Mr Zuyev. "If you can't achieve that peacefully, you do it by force." The government's failure to collect taxes, the chronic chain of debt between mines, railways and metal and power plants, and a galloping programme of pit closures, has sucked Prokopyevsk dry. Teachers, doctors and local government officials have not been paid since May or June. Pensions have not been paid since August. People live by

committee was a presidential decree allowing the local coal company to rid itself of the financial burden of maintaining the town's housing stock, and its central-heating system, by transferring them to the local authority. No one worked out how, with winter closing in, the mayor was to maintain and heat tens of thousands of state flats. He begged for government money; he was ignored. Temperatures in the Kuzbass can reach -30C. "The boilers weren't ready for winter," said Mr Zuyev. "In our conditions it means death. We demonstrated, we blocked the railways and the roads. What can you do when your constitutional right to life is violated?" Alexander Prokudin, Prokopyevsk's acting mayor, said the salvation committee had made Moscow take notice of the area's plight - proved last week when the deputy prime minister, Vladimir Potanin, paid a flying visit. Even Western advisers who have spent years prodding the Russian government to restructure the coal industry and close loss-making pits are disturbed. "The restructuring in the past five years has been massive, faster than in any other country," said one. "But it's not as socially responsible as it should be." The Kuzbass - once the seat of militant support for Boris Yeltsin - has turned into a communist stronghold. It voted overwhelmingly for the Communist Party candidate, Gennady Zyuganov, in presidential elections this year. Yet Prokopyevsk's relationship with the Communists is ambivalent. Its member of parliament, Nina Ostalina, is a Communist and a member of the town salvation committee. She opposes strikes and sees the salvation committees mainly as a way to force the region's despotic Yeltsin-appointed governor, Mikhail Kisluyok, to hold local elections. The people of Prokopyevsk feel that their lives are threatened, and are struggling to understand why. One salvation committee member, Oleg Khromin, a hospital therapist, digs into his briefcase to produce a document purporting to be a secret speech by the United States president, Bill Clinton, in which he outlines plans for world domination, including the destruction of the Russian coal industry. "We've demanded and demanded and our demands have not been fulfilled," said Mr Khromin. "Now we are preparing political demands, to bring to an end this predatory Yeltsin regime. If they don't listen, maybe we'll have to resort to weapons." Yet there is wariness of bloodshed. Mine young men have already returned to Prokopyevsk in zinc coffins from Chechnya. Younger people feel the town is doomed and see the best chance in escape. "The town is dying - there's nothing for us young people to do here," said Oksana, an office worker aged 20, who has not been paid since she started her job. "If there was something to lose here it would be sad. But as it is... I just want to get out."

Süssmuth 'used official jets for private pleasure'

German Speaker accused of sleaze

GERMANY'S parliamentary speaker, Rita Süssmuth, struggled to contain the fallout from embarrassing sleaze allegations yesterday, as taxpayers, the media and the opposition demanded answers to claims that she used official transport for her private pleasure. The Bonn prosecutor's office confirmed that it was investigating allegations that the most prominent woman in German politics had repeatedly exploited the availability of Luftwaffe jets for government and state functions to visit her daughter in Zürich. Through her spokesman, Mrs Süssmuth insisted she had never used the facility for private purposes and denying the allegations against the BILD am Sonntag newspaper, the first to report the allegations. Its editor responded sanguinely to the threat, and Dieter Lutz, vice-president of the German taxpayers' federation, who is leading the allegations against Mrs Süssmuth, said he was confident that his information was accurate. BILD quoted a Zürich airport employee as saying: "Mrs Süssmuth arrives here often to visit her daughter who lives in Switzerland. She comes on a Bundeswehr [armed forces] plane 90 per cent of the time." Two years ago Mrs Süssmuth's husband had to pay a \$2,000 fine to halt court proceedings after it became known that he had used an official car and chauffeur from the parliamentary pool to take the daughter to Switzerland where she is a stu-



Rita Süssmuth: tops popularity polls and is regarded as the nation's conscience

opposed to party contributions - need only be declared to the Speaker, and not publicly, if they exceed \$4,000 a year from a single donor. MPs' earnings from speaking or writing engagements need to be declared, again only to the Speaker, once they exceed \$12,000 a year. The Speaker is authorised to investigate MPs' conduct, without disclosing that any inquiry is being carried out. The German military's fleet of jets and helicopters are available for the use of the chancellor, the president, cabinet members, the Speaker and parliamentary caucus leaders, but only on official business. Mrs Süssmuth's spokesman said that the defence ministry checks that all requests for official transport meet the guidelines. But a defence ministry spokesman said that requests for official jets are taken on trust provided the official in question, as in Mrs Süssmuth's case, is entitled to the privilege. She is accused of using official jets 11 times to visit Switzerland to visit her daughter and also of using the military to ferry her to Holland on holiday. Three weeks ago, Mrs Süssmuth took an official jet to southern Germany to deliver a university address on "state responsibility and private responsibility". Using an official military aircraft on a return trip to Zürich is reckoned to cost \$12,000, about 55 times the price of a Luftwaffe ticket. In 1991, Chancellor Kohl and his wife Hannelore used the privileged air service on an emergency trip to Italy where their son had been injured in a car accident. Mr Kohl paid \$28,000 for the private use of the service. "Donations" to MPs - as

News in brief

Strikers bring Athens to a halt in austerity budget protest

THOUSANDS of strikers marched through the Greek capital yesterday before parliament began debating the government's austerity budget, writes Helena Smith in Athens. Civil servants, doctors and teachers walked off the job, joining strikes by Greek seamen and diplomats. The protests plunged the

country further into crisis as it entered its third week of a farmers' rail and road blockade. Bracing themselves for a showdown with the government, the farmers announced they would bring their self-proclaimed "holy war" against the tax-heavy budget to Athens with a demonstration outside parliament

tomorrow. "The government's got to understand that we're willing to stay here throughout the holidays," said a cotton grower guarding a roadblock outside Larissa, where the revolt is being co-ordinated. "We wouldn't be able to face our families if we returned to our villages empty-handed." The blockade, which has

cut Greece in half, has wrought unprecedented damage to the economy, with losses of more than \$442 million. Farmers say the budget, an effort to cut the deficit linked to the planned European single currency, expected too many sacrifices from Greeks who have seen their disposable incomes drop in recent years.

Nuclear cargo memo leaked

CONFIDENTIAL briefing papers giving details of the sailing dates and shipment routes of high-level nuclear waste from France to Japan have been leaked to Greenpeace, writes Paul Brown. The papers show that the British ship the Pacific Teal will leave Cherbourg on January 16 and sail via the Cape of Good Hope, the East of Australia and the South Pacific to Mitsui Ogasawara in Japan. France had intended to keep the route and date secret to avoid demonstrations and possible terrorism. Several countries have banned the ship carrying glassified waste from entering their territorial waters, and for that reason it avoids the Panama Canal. The French government memo to its embassies suggests states involved in the ship's routing should be told secretly of the plans on December 23, with other countries told in January, a few days before the sailing.

Borneo dam given go-ahead despite risk to environment

MALAYSIA'S government yesterday gave permission for work to begin on the construction of a dam that critics say will flood thousands of acres of rain forest on Borneo island. The dam in Sarawak state, which will be run by Bakun Hydroelectric Corporation, is expected to generate 2,400 megawatts of electricity, and is scheduled to start operating on October 31, 2002. Construction work was

Mother gets mummy treatment as Israel bars deep-freeze

THEY had hoped to freeze their mother's body until the day medical technology could bring her back to life. But after 14 days of court hearings, Moshe and Rachel Beeri agreed yesterday to mummify her instead. Esther Beeri died two weeks ago of natural causes, aged 70. Her children proposed to mummify her - a move approved by the Tel Aviv district court

yesterday - after realising it was impossible in Israel to keep the body on ice. "They were very sad," their attorney, Nachshon Fisher, said. "They accepted this only because there was no other choice." The Israeli burial society and health ministry opposed the request to keep the body at home in a freezer. Instead, it will be preserved in oil and wrapped in thick nylon before burial. - AP.

France's PM publishes and promises to do better next year

Paul Webster in Paris

WHEN a prime minister slumps in opinion polls, faces internal party revolt and becomes the butt of cartoonists, what can he do except admit that he has made a mess of things and promise to do better in the New Year? Some leaders may not agree with the method, but Alain Juppé, the most unpopular French prime minister for nearly 40 years, yesterday released a book which amounts to an apology for his 20 months in power. His term has been marked by street protests, criticism from within the divided Gaullist-RPR, of which he is chairman. In his book, called "Between Ourselves", Mr Juppé says that someone has to do the dirty work of prime minister. "Only a year and a half ago I went to the prime minister's office full of dynamism, mandated by public opinion which saw me as the ideal prime minister," he writes. "Today I am beating all the records of unpopularity." Mr Juppé went to the seaside to write the book and consider why pundits saw him as a distant and arrogant technocrat. "I am not as dry and I am more sensitive than the newspapers make me out. I am not a monster of indifference... I am hurt by a feeling of injustice." Excusing himself for not being a Superman, Mr Juppé accepts responsibility for failed job-creation programmes, saying he considers unemployment "my cross". The book was followed up by radio and television interviews. But Le Monde yesterday suggested that Mr Juppé was wasting his time. "The electorate may be touched, but it won't make them forget the difficulties of their daily lives," the newspaper said. "Mr Juppé says that unemployment is his cross but a book is not going to change anything."

Serbs find it's good to walk

The daily protest marches are a form of group therapy, Julian Borger in Belgrade writes

SERBS are finding that a brisk walk after lunch can do wonders for their country's health. Their daily mass stroll to protest against government election-rigging has lent new meaning to the term "afternoon constitutional". Last weekend, 250,000 people took part in a demonstration in Belgrade - an eighth of the city's population. And the habit has spread to 30 other cities and towns. Students stage walks between the main industrial centres to bind the movement together. The marches are not only opening cracks in President Slobodan Milosevic's monolithic regime, but are fast becoming an alternative lifestyle - even group therapy. For many, the four-mile walk through Belgrade's city centre has become routine. They bring their children, their in-laws, their dogs. They shout, blow whistles and honk hooters. Families living along the route drum their support on sawcaucuses on the balconies. So if Mr Milosevic is waiting for the protest movement to die a natural death, he may have a long wait. After war, sanctions and hyper-inflation, this is more fun than most Serbs have had in years. Sonja Biserko, a human rights activist at the Helsinki Committee in Belgrade, said: "In this whole atmosphere of depression, apathy, this protest gives people the feeling that something can be done. It's as much social and psychological as political." Doctors predict beneficial effects for a society which smokes too much, drinks too much coffee, and has been in danger of losing its sense of purpose in Mr Milosevic's no-hope economy, where most of the workforce is unemployed or paid a pittance in factories. "This is a kind of collective therapy," said Zarko Korac, a professor of psychology at Belgrade University. "The marches liberate people from fear, which has been internalised, and from being incapable of expressing their anger." "It's symbolic that people are using whistles, shouting. They are breathing freely once again. It's a catharsis." Dragan Dzeric, aged 48, has left his barber shop early to join the marches since they began on November 18 - the day after rigged local elections. He says it is worth the \$15 a day in lost earnings. "The first few days I was exhausted, but now I've lost some weight, and I feel I could walk for ever," he said. "I'm amazed at how the old people

and the invalids keep going." Mr Dzeric's three-year-old daughter Milica was waving a Yugoslav flag. He also marches with his former wife. He said: "We were already on good terms but these marches bring everybody together even more." He believes the protests will continue through winter if necessary. "I've already bought my rubber boots and woollen socks." Olga Knesovic, a retired local government clerk aged 56, said: "It has made life more exciting. Everybody is happier, and it has brought Belgrade together." She met her local grocer, Dragan Divac, in the crowd that assembled in the offices of the Zajedno (Together) opposition coalition, and they now march together. Mr Divac goes to work at 6.30am, so that he can knock off in time. Asked how long he could keep it up, he nodded

It's symbolic that people are using whistles, shouting. They are breathing freely once again. It's a catharsis'

towards some government buildings and said: "One day longer than them." A few rows ahead, Ljiljana Tomic marches with her husband and four children. She said: "Whatever happens, they will have something to be proud of when they're older. It will show we are peaceful people. We didn't want the war. It was our government that was responsible." Many demonstrators insist that, although they consider themselves patriots, they are steadfastly anti-war. Yet anti-war protests during the Croatian and Bosnian conflicts were they in comparison to today's civil rights campaign. Mirjana Bobic-Mojisilovic, a journalist and commentator, said one buried factor driving the protests is a sense of guilt that more people could have done more to stop the killing. "People realised they should have reacted when he [Milosevic] started war. We didn't have adequate reactions. Everyone feels they have to pay a personal price for that." President Milosevic, in his first meeting with protesters, said yesterday that his main task was to respect the will of the people and enforce the rule of law. According to the official Tanjug news agency, he told students: "A foreign hand shall not rule Serbia. We are our own masters and we must resolve our problems within our institutions."



Alain Juppé: apology



Quentin Bell

Head, heart and hands of Bloomsbury

WHEN asked to describe a dear family friend, whose personality has granted for years, it sometimes happens that the solid figure dissolves, perhaps because time has shaken the kaleidoscope of images. This is far from true in the case of Quentin Bell, whose death from a heart attack, aged 68, has spread deep sadness. His presence and lifestyle form a continuous conversation-piece drawn with strength, permanence and delicacy on the inner screen of memory. There is no need to choose among phases of his life — from his rumbustious boyhood to his dignified old age he remained firmly and essentially the same human being.

I knew Quentin and his brother Julian when they were schoolboys. My first distinct memory of them dates from a party given by Maynard and Lydia Keynes in the late 1920s. It was a typical Bloomsbury affair — an elaborate entertainment, such as a brilliant impersonation of a fortune-teller by Mrs Desmond MacCarthy, so well disguised that not a soul recognised her and she was begging to slip across a lot of home truths. But the most amusing performance was given in all unconsciousness by the Bell boys, standing side by side in front of the fire, wearing evening suits several sizes too big for them and carrying on a non-stop fortissimo dialogue, punctuated by peals of ringing laughter. This habit of youth-

ful and sublimous amusement remained with Quentin all his life and was one of his great charms. He grew into a tall young man with thick red hair, a noble brow and a pink complexion. There was something cherubic in his appearance: one would not have been surprised to see him on a ceiling by Tiepolo. He was a favourite with his aunt, Virginia Woolf, and approved of his attire and enjoyed collaborating with him in literary squibs, while her diary notices his development. At 16 he was "terrifically sophisticated". Her sister Vanessa's children "had grown up without opposition, nothing to twist or stunt". At 18 he had become elegant, quick and sensitive; by 22 he had "all Nessa's sense and Clive's shrewdness". He was notably objective, interested in politics, psycho-analysis, stocks, his wards he developed pleurisy and TB, and had to lead a regime of days stretched on a chaise-longue in the garden at Charleston. Perhaps it was this unwelcome inactivity that led him to a life of letters: he had always been a great reader, now he took to writing, painting and potting as well, for he was true to the environment of his youth in London, his spiritual centre, his idyllically happy marriage to Olivier Popham; his academic progress as a professor of Art History, which took him to



A life in art... Quentin Bell, above, drawn by Walter Sickert at a Bloomsbury party in the Twenties "wearing his size-eleven suit several sizes too big" and emitting "peals of ringing laughter". Left, he was photographed by Howard Grey in 1979, when he had grown into the beard he had adopted when young. Far left, he is seen with sister, Angelica Garnett, before the famous painted fireplace of the family home Charleston, in 1982, in a photograph by Peter Johns

Newcastle, Leeds and Oxford, as well as on many lecturing trips at home and abroad, and his career as a writer on diverse subjects from the history of dress to the life of Virginia Woolf (which won several prizes). Painting gave way to ceramics: there were life-sized figures in pottery or fibreglass, smaller ones for indoors — brightly coloured and showing a vein of Gothic fantasy, jugs, mugs and dishes. But like everything he did and said, all transparently expressed his personality. He was an excellent lecturer, too, with a dry and individual wit; even the anxious furrows that appeared on his forehead seemed to be self-mocking. So-called retirement drew him again to Sussex, where his three children grew up and his friends enjoyed a warm welcome at Cobbe Place and Fittle where all was harmony and comfort. Pictures from Bloomsbury and the Euston Road hung on subtly coloured walls, where every room was full of books and Quentin's pottery stood on every shelf and table. In my favouring mental portrait, he is emerging at about tea-time from his potter's studio with a look of contentment and benevolent affection on his face — it was that of a man who was, in the best sense, an intellectual, yet found his greatest joys in family life and in using his hands.

He always made the impression of thoughtfully charting his own course — into the swimming pool. He adored discussion but never lost his cool in the course of it. I remember he told us how passionately interested he was in the war — he would not have been born at any other time for anything. About this time Virginia Woolf described him as being like a large red and white sheep, suggesting that he had already grown the beard which made him look so much older than he was. It was a typically rational decision — shaving was a waste of time. With the peace came fulfilment in many spheres: his idyllically happy marriage to Olivier Popham; his academic progress as a professor of Art History, which took him to

Newcastle, Leeds and Oxford, as well as on many lecturing trips at home and abroad, and his career as a writer on diverse subjects from the history of dress to the life of Virginia Woolf (which won several prizes). Painting gave way to ceramics: there were life-sized figures in pottery or fibreglass, smaller ones for indoors — brightly coloured and showing a vein of Gothic fantasy, jugs, mugs and dishes. But like everything he did and said, all transparently expressed his personality. He was an excellent lecturer, too, with a dry and individual wit; even the anxious furrows that appeared on his forehead seemed to be self-mocking. So-called retirement drew him again to Sussex, where his three children grew up and his friends enjoyed a warm welcome at Cobbe Place and Fittle where all was harmony and comfort. Pictures from Bloomsbury and the Euston Road hung on subtly coloured walls, where every room was full of books and Quentin's pottery stood on every shelf and table. In my favouring mental portrait, he is emerging at about tea-time from his potter's studio with a look of contentment and benevolent affection on his face — it was that of a man who was, in the best sense, an intellectual, yet found his greatest joys in family life and in using his hands.

hidden by "some blessed bolder or a supremely fortunate gardener of rigging". In one sense, both these books represent Bell's reaction to the aesthetic climate in which he had grown up. They are a spirited salvo against the "significant form" and "over-framophone" views of his father Clive Bell, rather than against Roger Fry, Quentin's true mentor whose breadth of sympathies he continued to admire. Such reaction, however, was evident at a much earlier date in

mother and Duncan Grant) in 1940-42. Certainly, his austere Burne-Jonesish mural of the Wise and Foolish Virgins contrasts with the warmer lyricism of his collaborators. By then, Quentin's interest in ceramics, technically grounded in a spell working in the Potteries, had become dominant. From sturdy cups and saucers decorated by himself with black abstract calligraphy or idealised female heads, he moved on to sculpture. He worked on small and large scale, from intimate figurative peep-shows, through fantastic lamp stands to enormous goddesses and nymphs (some can be seen today in the garden at Charleston) which his wife, Olivier, would reluctantly agree were based on her handsome face and proportions. This see-saw life of fine art and writing took on great urgency after his marriage. Painting and potting were mainly relegated to the summer vacations away from Newcastle and Leeds. Journalism flourished in spare time. Later, he assumed a more objective discipline, encouraged by his attendance at the Euston Road School where he met his life-long friends, William Goldstream, Victor Pasmore, Claude Rogers and Lawrence Cowling. As a painter, his last major work was his contribution to the decoration of Berwick Church, Sussex (with his

Ruby Murray

The husky queen of broken hearts

RUBY Murray, the singer whose enduring vulnerability of style was an all-too-accurate reflection of her troubled, often unhappy and alcohol-shadowed life, has died aged 62. She had been modestly unique among British popular singers. If she was, in her heyday in the 1950s, the queen of the top twenty — and only Elvis Presley and Madonna have since surpassed her — she was also a woman who had five records simultaneously there — she was a sad one, with an apparently incurable sense of exile and helplessness. Her husky tone — which she joked was the result of her throat getting rusty after her mother left her out in the rain — always suggested that she was on the point of breaking down in quiet tears. Her number one hit *Softly, Softly*, which was her signature tune for 11 years, and her second release, *Heartbeat*, which went straight to number two in the charts, established her as a national favourite and over the years made millions, although mostly for other people. Although she was earning extensively in the 1950s, when she was cutting two or three records in a morning, appearing in a TV series and performing at the London Palladium in the evenings, much of the money passed through her grasp, in ways that she, or those professionally close to her, could have prevented. But she had little financial sense and, though singing was something she had done since her early childhood, actually going on stage was a torture which grew worse as she aged. To her second husband (and her senior by 18 years)

Ray Lamar, who worked for the Bernard Belfont theatre organisation first in London and then in his south coast theatres, Ruby Murray was always "just an ordinary lovely girl" whose naturalness did indeed make her *The Girl Next Door* — a tag which seemed to be part of that condescension which she always feared and resented. If she had no gimmicks and no backing groups, just her own sweet voice and personality, this was just her performing problem: it left her over-exposed and sucked dry by the demands of her art. When she died yesterday in Torbay Hospital, of acute liver failure, she had been off alcohol for two years. This abstinence was too late. She had begun drinking heavily at around the time her first marriage, to Bernard Burgess, began to fall apart after her infatuation with a fellow Roman Catholic, the Irish comedian Frank Carson, became too public. There was a messy divorce in 1977. She sued Burgess and the counter-plaintiff, alleging physical violence by her. Burgess was given custody of the two children and stayed on with them at Rectory Cottage, their 17th century home at Wootton, Northamptonshire. It was a tribute both to their good nature and her power to evoke sympathy that her children and first husband joined Ray Lamar, whom she finally married in 1993, at her death bed. It was obvious where legal sympathy lay in the divorce, but the loss of her home and children could not have failed to push her downwards into an alcoholic spiral. In 1982, she was arrested in Torquay and fined £30 for being drunk and disorderly. Spending a

night in police cells, she entertained the receptive constabulary by singing some of her hit numbers. Three years later she appeared to bounce back with a standing ovation when she was on stage before Princess Anne — in *Forty Years of Peace*, marking the end of the second world war. In 1989 she drew great comfort from the fact that her son, Tim, won a heat of the TV contest *New Faces* and came fifth in the final. But it was not long before she was abruptly sacked from a starring role in a theatre at Erixham. Her last appearance in London was at Brick Lane Music Hall in 1983. It was tragic. Finding it difficult even to walk without help, she gave a performance which was punctuated by her violent coughing. She could still inspire loyalty from her fans. At four Ruby saw, at the Belfast Empire, G H Elliott's famous *Chocolate Coloured Coon* act — an indication of how different the entertainment world was then — and determined to go on stage herself. She joined a children's choir. Bought a piano by her parents for 30 shillings, she performed at the Ulster Hall, Belfast, in one of the shows put on by her father, "Big Den" Murray. In the audience was the TV producer, Richard Afton, who booked her for her first professional appearance on Irish TV. She was 12. Two years later she left school and had the usual series of dead-end jobs of the period, in a bakery, a handkerchief factory and a sweet shop. Then her mother died. Her first companion on a tour of Northern Ireland in the variety show *Top Flight Stars*, Josef Locke and Ronnie Carroll were among the other performers in it who were later to become famous. At 14, she appeared in *Mrs Mulligan's Hotel* at Glasgow, then toured Northern Ireland — in a hired lorry — in *Holiday Express*. At 16, she was singing in the revue *Yankee Doodle Blarney*, touring Ireland and then going into the Metropolitan Music Hall in Edgware Road, London. There Richard Afton was again in the audience. His led singer in the BBC series

performed, "don't patronise me." Her background had pointed her towards both the stage and disaster. Born in Belfast, she was the third daughter and youngest child of the four children of Daniel Murray, a Scot who was born in the Shankill Road (and himself died of alcoholism) and his Irish wife. At four Ruby saw, at the Belfast Empire, G H Elliott's famous *Chocolate Coloured Coon* act — an indication of how different the entertainment world was then — and determined to go on stage herself. She joined a children's choir. Bought a piano by her parents for 30 shillings, she performed at the Ulster Hall, Belfast, in one of the shows put on by her father, "Big Den" Murray. In the audience was the TV producer, Richard Afton, who booked her for her first professional appearance on Irish TV. She was 12. Two years later she left school and had the usual series of dead-end jobs of the period, in a bakery, a handkerchief factory and a sweet shop. Then her mother died. Her first companion on a tour of Northern Ireland in the variety show *Top Flight Stars*, Josef Locke and Ronnie Carroll were among the other performers in it who were later to become famous. At 14, she appeared in *Mrs Mulligan's Hotel* at Glasgow, then toured Northern Ireland — in a hired lorry — in *Holiday Express*. At 16, she was singing in the revue *Yankee Doodle Blarney*, touring Ireland and then going into the Metropolitan Music Hall in Edgware Road, London. There Richard Afton was again in the audience. His led singer in the BBC series

performed, "don't patronise me." Her background had pointed her towards both the stage and disaster. Born in Belfast, she was the third daughter and youngest child of the four children of Daniel Murray, a Scot who was born in the Shankill Road (and himself died of alcoholism) and his Irish wife. At four Ruby saw, at the Belfast Empire, G H Elliott's famous *Chocolate Coloured Coon* act — an indication of how different the entertainment world was then — and determined to go on stage herself. She joined a children's choir. Bought a piano by her parents for 30 shillings, she performed at the Ulster Hall, Belfast, in one of the shows put on by her father, "Big Den" Murray. In the audience was the TV producer, Richard Afton, who booked her for her first professional appearance on Irish TV. She was 12. Two years later she left school and had the usual series of dead-end jobs of the period, in a bakery, a handkerchief factory and a sweet shop. Then her mother died. Her first companion on a tour of Northern Ireland in the variety show *Top Flight Stars*, Josef Locke and Ronnie Carroll were among the other performers in it who were later to become famous. At 14, she appeared in *Mrs Mulligan's Hotel* at Glasgow, then toured Northern Ireland — in a hired lorry — in *Holiday Express*. At 16, she was singing in the revue *Yankee Doodle Blarney*, touring Ireland and then going into the Metropolitan Music Hall in Edgware Road, London. There Richard Afton was again in the audience. His led singer in the BBC series



Once again with feeling... Ruby Murray rehearsing while on tour in Leicester, spring 1955

performed, "don't patronise me." Her background had pointed her towards both the stage and disaster. Born in Belfast, she was the third daughter and youngest child of the four children of Daniel Murray, a Scot who was born in the Shankill Road (and himself died of alcoholism) and his Irish wife. At four Ruby saw, at the Belfast Empire, G H Elliott's famous *Chocolate Coloured Coon* act — an indication of how different the entertainment world was then — and determined to go on stage herself. She joined a children's choir. Bought a piano by her parents for 30 shillings, she performed at the Ulster Hall, Belfast, in one of the shows put on by her father, "Big Den" Murray. In the audience was the TV producer, Richard Afton, who booked her for her first professional appearance on Irish TV. She was 12. Two years later she left school and had the usual series of dead-end jobs of the period, in a bakery, a handkerchief factory and a sweet shop. Then her mother died. Her first companion on a tour of Northern Ireland in the variety show *Top Flight Stars*, Josef Locke and Ronnie Carroll were among the other performers in it who were later to become famous. At 14, she appeared in *Mrs Mulligan's Hotel* at Glasgow, then toured Northern Ireland — in a hired lorry — in *Holiday Express*. At 16, she was singing in the revue *Yankee Doodle Blarney*, touring Ireland and then going into the Metropolitan Music Hall in Edgware Road, London. There Richard Afton was again in the audience. His led singer in the BBC series

Letter: Edward Blishen

Brian Simon writes: *WJ Webb's fine memorial for Edward Blishen (December 10)* does not mention Edward's strong and consistent support for comprehensive education. Soon after the publication of his path-breaking *Roaring Dogs* (1956), and while still a teacher at Archway county secondary school in London, he joined the original editorial board of the educational journal *Forum*, established by Robin Medley and myself to promote discussion around the objective of comprehensive schools. Edward contributed frequently to the journal from its first number, remaining a member of the board for 15 years, attending meetings and contributing to our (sometimes) uproarious discussions. Indeed in 1987 he gallantly returned contribu-

ing a full report of an all-day "deconstructive" conference Forum organised in critical opposition to the so-called "Great Education Reform Bill", passed into law in 1988. Edward was strongly opposed to the market-based reconstruction of the system embodied in that Act. In this, being the same line as his great friend, Harry Rée, who spoke at the conference. In Edward we have lost a true humanist, with a deep concern for the liberating power of education as a chief means of self-realisation. Life enhancing, humorous and witty, he was a true companion with a clear, unselfish, intellectual view of his ideals, to which he remained faithful all his life. He will be greatly missed throughout the educational, as well as the literary world.

Birthdays

Field Marshal Lord Bramall, soldier and former Chief of the Defence Staff, 72; Francis Crook, director of the Howard League for Penal Reform, 48; Jules Dassin, film director, 83; Christopher Fry, playwright and poet, 88; Cardinal Archbishop Jozef Glemp, Primate of Poland, 66; Pamela Lady Harcourt, chairman of the English National Ballet, 61; Rosemary Leach, actress, 60; Geoffrey Lothhouse MP, deputy chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, 68; The Rt Rev Christopher Mayfield, Bishop of Manchester, 60; Lord Merlyn-Rees, former Labour Home Secretary, 78; John Mott, civil engineer, 62; Anita O'Day, jazz singer, 76; Keith Richard, still a Rolling Stone, 62; Steven Spielberg, film director and producer, executive of Dreamworks studio, 48; Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, tennis player, 24; The Rt Rev Robert Williamson, Bishop of Southwark, 63.

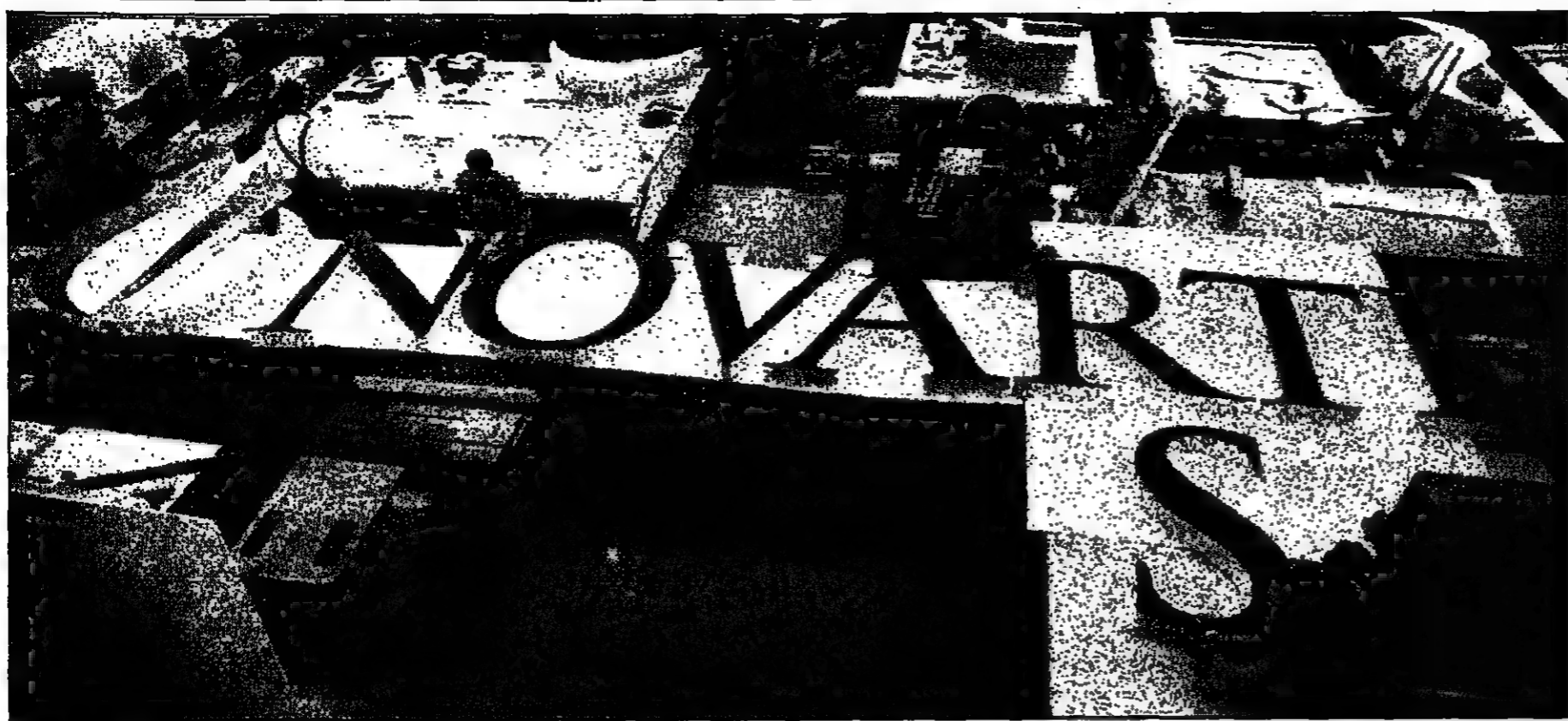
Death Notices

RELL, Quentin, died at home on 10th December 1996, aged 68.
HOWES - On December 16th, at home in Central London as she wished, without relatives, but in the presence of a friend, the beloved sister of Joy Leffen, and aunt to Philip, Roger and Mary. Funeral service at Golders Green Crematorium (West Chapel) 11.30am, London NW11 at 2.30pm on Friday 19th December. Contributions only, but donations in lieu, in memory of her late husband, Mr R.S.P.C.A. via Arantxa, 25 Lamb's Conduit Street, London WC7N 3AH Tel: 0171 405 6261.
MURPHY, Donald Jefferson, suddenly, on 14th December, aged 83. Musician, actor, writer and friend for many years of Poetic and Postmodern, husband and daughter, beloved grandfather, younger brother of Sir John Gielgud, brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud, and brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud, and brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud, and brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud. Burial at Golders Green Crematorium on Friday 20th December. Donations in memory of her late husband, Mr R.S.P.C.A. via Arantxa, 25 Lamb's Conduit Street, London WC7N 3AH Tel: 0171 405 6261.
PERRY, Professor Jack, widower of his beloved Gertrude, dearly-loved father of Sir John Gielgud, brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud, and brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud, and brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud, and brother-in-law of Sir John Gielgud. Burial at Golders Green Crematorium on Friday 20th December. Donations in memory of her late husband, Mr R.S.P.C.A. via Arantxa, 25 Lamb's Conduit Street, London WC7N 3AH Tel: 0171 405 6261.

July 10 1950

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian



Workers in Aesch, near Basel in Switzerland, assemble a neon sign for Novartis, the creation of a \$21 billion merger between Ciba-Geigy and Sandoz, which yesterday received its long-awaited US approval. The merger will create the world's second-largest drug company behind Glaxo Wellcome and lead to loss of 10,000 jobs. PHOTOGRAPH BY ERWIN ZANDEN

Treasury committee exposes weaknesses in banking supervision and threatens Old Lady's powers

Bank berated over Barings



Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

AN INFLUENTIAL committee of MPs yesterday launched a highly critical attack on the Bank of England's handling of the collapse of the merchant bank Barings, even suggesting that it may have to be stripped of one of its key roles supervising the British banking industry.

The report underlines the Bank's difficulty in supervising banks like Barings, as they expand from traditional merchant banking activities into volatile international security markets.

The report also recommends that ministerial responsibility for all aspects of financial regulation and supervision — including that of the insurance industry — should be switched to the Treasury, "at the earliest opportunity".

Improvements in relationships and communication channels between regulators still to be made at an international level. Unfortunately, it appears that it is not yet the first instinct of all regulators who have a concern about an institution to contact the other regulators involved and not just the institution itself.

Foot: "We recognise and welcome the Bank's current attempts to clarify the framework for its judgmental approach to supervision and urge the Bank to ensure that the type of laxity of management illustrated at Barings could not still go undetected under the new regime," commented the MPs.

BT confronts OfTel in court

Nicholas Barnister
Technology Editor

DON Cruickshank, director-general of OfTel, acted unlawfully when he included a catch-all fair trading clause in British Telecom's licence, lawyers for the telecom group argued in the High Court yesterday.

BT and OfTel, the industry regulator, have clashed repeatedly in recent months over whether Mr Cruickshank has the authority to extend his powers to include a clause prohibiting any form of anti-competitive behaviour by BT.

Mr Henderson said Parliament did not intend giving Mr Cruickshank the authority to expand his powers to become a full blooded fair trading authority, with the combined roles of policeman, judge and jury.

There were parallels in the 1973 and 1980 Fair Trading Acts in which Parliament had specifically prevented the Director-General of Fair Trading from taking such action.

Minister to offer building societies extra protection

Richard Hines

THE Government is expected to offer building societies that become banks an extra safeguard against hostile takeovers when it publishes the draft Building Societies Bill today.

company law, shareholders will 10 per cent of stock will still be able to demand an extraordinary general meeting.

Call for investigation into rail pension 'highway robbery'

Rebecca Smithers
Political Correspondent

LABOUR demanded urgent clarification from the Government last night of plans for the £500 million surplus from the British Rail pension fund, and accused the Government of breaking its promise that the £10.5 billion British Rail pension fund would not be adversely affected by privatisation.

ing assurances that the position of pensioners and employees would be safeguarded, and that it would be the responsibility of the independent rail pension trustees to "determine the distribution of the surplus".

News in brief

Public finances back in the red

After a surprising move into surplus in October, the Government's finances were back in the red again last month, justifying the cautious approach to tax cuts taken by the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, in the Budget.

Small firms saved jobs

The small business sector, trumpeted as the main source of new jobs by the Government, has a dismal record, according to research by the Employment Policy Institute.

North Sea free-for-all

After 35 years of controlling where oil companies can explore in the North Sea, the Government yesterday declared open season on untapped areas to promote new drilling and slow an expected decline in production.

Ross in £44m buy-out

United Biscuits has sold Ross Vegetable Products, its frozen vegetables business, to a management buy-out team for £44 million.

Fund managers get behind

Ian King

FIKI, the fast-expanding engineering group, was in the almost unprecedented position yesterday of securing the support of two leading fund managers on the day it launched a hostile £198.7 million bid for architectural and building products supplier Newman Tonks.

Target company to launch its defence document before deciding.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.04	France 6.4965	Italy 2.466	Singapore 2.28
Austria 17.82	Germany 2.5065	Malta 0.5650	South Africa 7.57
Belgium 51.25	Greece 338.55	Netherlands 2.5710	Spain 210.20
Canada 2.2255	Hong Kong 12.50	New Zealand 2.5775	Sweden 11.77
Cyprus 0.7555	India 50.55	Norway 10.40	Switzerland 1.13
Denmark 5.82	Ireland 0.5720	Portugal 253.70	Turkey 168.082
Finland 7.82	Israel 4.10	Saudi Arabia 2.2150	USA 1.4205

Supplied by Reuters Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel)

Notebook

Equal before the company law



Mark Milner

INEVITABLY there will be those who will find it irritating to have Ernest Saunders again parading his claims of innocence in the Guinness affair. There will be others who will be concerned that Mr Saunders is able to do so on the back of another European ruling, this time from the Court of Human Rights.

will be more effective in terms of enforcement and deterrence.

Supervisory snag

THE Treasury Select committee report into the regulatory aspects of the collapse of Barings is clearly a yellow card for the Bank of England. The committee has effectively put it on notice that another fiasco and the pressure to remove the Bank's supervisory role will be well nigh irresistible.

The snag for supporters of such radical reform is the question of where then to put the responsibility for supervision. One answer would be to bring it within the orbit of the Treasury. The Treasury might not object, but would a Chancellor of the Exchequer — perhaps with an election in the offing — really want to risk finding himself or herself in the political firing line over a failure of banking supervision?

Santa Scrooge

THE Swedish central bank is such a Scrooge. Yesterday it cut its interest rate for only the 35th time this year (yes, 25th; yes, this year) then partly pooped by pointing out that this would be the last one — well, at least until next year.

Mr Whalley said acquisition of Newman Tonks would create an international hardware business with a turnover of more than £500 million, with Newman Tonks's British and European businesses complementing FKI's US activities.

GUINNESS REVISITED

by Dan Atkinson in Strasbourg and Roger Cowe

Saunders peddles tale of innocence

THE QUEST/Ruling rubs raw nerve of Britain's touchy relationship with the European Court of Human Rights

THERE was a time when Ernest Saunders sold toilet-tries, baby milk and a dark stout beer whose name has become a synonym for one of the biggest financial scandals in British history: Guinness. But for the past seven years Mr Saunders has been selling just one product—his own innocence. Like the central character in Tom Wolfe's novel Bonfire of the Vanities, Mr Saunders has become "a career defendant". By chance, Mr Saunders's final appeal in his quest for justice to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, touched yet another raw nerve in the relationship between the UK and Europe's supranational institutions. The success of the Saunders appeal came after the court was presented with two contrasting interpretations of a case that was decided in Strasbourg nearly four years ago. Jean-Gustave Funke, a German living in France, was interviewed in the initial inquiry and six years after Mr Funke's death, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the French had violated his human rights by insisting he produce the evidence required to mount a case against him. This was held to be in breach of Article Six of Europe's Human Rights Convention. Enthusiasts for greater European integration have embraced Funke as the equivalent of the Miranda precedent in the United States; to them, Article Six is set to become Europe's answer to the Fifth Amendment. The British government took a different view, however. Sidney Kentridge QC, the UK advocate, told the court during the Saunders hearing: "The Funke case arose in a very different context." Nevertheless, Article Six was the basis of Mr Saunders's last attempt to remove what his counsel, Michael Be-

loff QC, told the court was "the stigma of his conviction". Between February 10 and May 6, 1987, Mr Saunders was interviewed nine times by Department of Trade and Industry inspectors investigating allegations that an illegal share-support operation took place during the takeover battle, worth a final £2.7 billion, waged by Guinness for the Scottish whisky group Distillers (DCL). Under British law, Mr Saunders had no right of silence during those interviews. Had he refused to answer any questions or produce documents, he would have committed a criminal offence. He went on trial in 1990, on 15 counts, including eight of false accounting, two of theft and several of conspiracy, and was convicted in August that year on 13 counts. His five-year sentence was halved in May 1991 by the Court of Appeal after it heard medical evidence he was suffering from pre-senile dementia. He was released after serving 10 months in an open prison. His counsel claimed the compulsory interviews (seven of which were admitted as evidence) were crucial to the Crown's success in obtaining conviction against him. The Crown told the court that this was nonsense. Mr Saunders, did not admit during the interviews with the inspectors nor in the witness box any involvement in propping up Guinness shares, it said. The judges rejected that claim yesterday, pointing out that if the DTI evidence had not been helpful to the prosecution, it would not have spent three days reading extracts to the Guinness trial jury. "The fact that such extensive use was made of the interviews strongly suggests that the prosecution must have believed that the reading of the transcripts assisted their case in establishing the applicant's dishonesty," the Strasbourg judges said. That view was supported by the Guinness trial judge's statement that two of the seven interviews were capable of being considered a "confession" under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act. The UK had claimed the Funke case did not rule out the use of evidence acquired under compulsion, and won some support from the European Commission on Human Rights, which declined to suggest a blanket ban on such evidence. In September 1994, the commission brought the case (first raised by Mr Saunders in July 1988) to the court after ruling in May that year, by 14 votes to one, there had been a violation of Article Six.



PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN REVELL

I do feel myself to be an innocent man. I never considered giving up this battle. This is not a question of compensation. This is a matter of principle; vindication of my name is sufficient.

Fraud busters deprived of key weapon

BRITAIN'S system for prosecuting serious white-collar crime was thrown into chaos yesterday by the European Court of Human Rights' ruling backing former Guinness chief Ernest Saunders. Special "talk-or-else" powers dating back more than 100 years will have to be abandoned. The Strasbourg judges have effectively handed the use in court of evidence gathered under threat of punishment for failure to answer, arguing that this negates suspects' right to silence, which is enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights. That means the Department of Trade and Industry, insolvency experts and possibly fraud investigators will lose their chief weapon in the battle against fraud. Duncan Aldred of the law firm Cameron Mackay Hewitt said: "It is a challenge to the system. The whole direction will have to be rethought." The Department of Trade and Industry said there were 340 cases going through the UK courts where some evidence obtained had been gained through the use of compulsion. The vast majority of these cases relate to company insolvency, but the Strasbourg judgment may also affect insolvency law. Some trials based on compulsory testimony may have to be dropped. The Government must act quickly to bring British law into line with Article Six of the convention. The DTI said all options would be considered, including the possibility of legislation. Only if the Government reclassifies serious fraud as a national security issue will it be able to duck the Strasbourg ruling. Fraud investigations by the Serious Fraud Office may not be affected. The SFO said last night that its powers were different to those used by DTI inspectors, allowing it only in special circumstances to use in court evidence gathered under compulsion. But, with the court signalling its intention to strengthen Article Six into a European equivalent of America's Fifth Amendment, the time may come when the SFO's ability to strip suspects of their rights against self-incrimination will be struck down in Strasbourg. The Government can retain the rights of DTI inspectors to compel witnesses to give evidence—which dates back at least until the middle of last century, when the courts up-



Black beer and black arts serve as symbols of excess

THE AFFAIR/Wall Street broker in disgrace spilled beans over share rigging in bid battle for Distillers



one thing: a black beer originating in London markets (hence porter), which had emigrated to Ireland, eventually finding fans in outposts of the British Empire. But times were changing throughout British industry and Guinness's family owners had felt the chill wind of the first recession; anxious about falling sales they engaged the marketing whizz-kid Ernest Saunders. He may not have fitted the patrician Guinness style, but in the atmosphere of the 1980s that was a recommendation. Already victorious in the battle for whisky-maker Bell, Mr Saunders was stalking bigger prey. And Mr Gulliver's tilt at DCL gave him the opening he needed. Mr Saunders—still seen in the industry as an arch wheeler-dealer—was no more typical of Distillers' style than he had been of the Guinness one. But faced with the prospect of being taken over by a mere grocer, DCL management swallowed its pride and sought salvation in an agreed bid from Guinness.

Ironically, given its later central role in the case, the Department of Trade and Industry made the whole thing possible. Previously a Tartan Curtain had effectively protected Scottish firms against predatory activity. But such interventionist doctrine was out of favour and the DTI made it clear to DCL there would be no help from the Monopolies Commission. The new year, 1986, dawned with a three-way fight: Mr Gulliver bidding for Distillers; Distillers fighting off Mr Gulliver; and Mr Saunders fighting Mr Gulliver with help from Distillers. It was close. The bidding went to £2.7 billion. Victory for Guinness was by no means certain, hanging on a thread until the last moment. The fight was one of the dirtiest anyone could remember. And key to the battle was the respective values of three sets of shares: Distillers, Guinness and Mr Gulliver's Argyle. And it was the alleged manipulation and inflation of Guinness shares by an unlawful share support operation that was to trigger what has now been a decade-long criminal affair. Hardly had Mr Saunders time to savour triumph than events across the Atlantic were conspiring to destroy him. The undoubted star of mid-1980s Wall Street was an arbitrageur called Ivan Boesky. His book on share choosing was a best-seller. Admirers talked breathlessly of his complex mathematical system for choosing investments. But America's fearsome financial regulator, the Securities and Exchange Commission, was sceptical and its inquiries proved its suspicions: Boesky's "system" was the oldest in the book, inside information. During hours of testimony to the SEC, Boesky mentioned in passing that he had been involved in share support during the Guinness bid. Under an information-sharing agreement, the SEC alerted the British authorities. On December 1, 1986 two DTI inspectors arrived at the office of Ernest Saunders. The landlidle had started. Mr Saunders was questioned by the DTI, dismissed by Guinness, charged with aid, in 1990, convicted of running an illegal share-rigging operation during the bid, and led away to prison. But Guinness would not go away. In February 1992 the Serious Fraud Office dropped charges against the financier, Roger Seelig, and the stockbroker, David Maybew. Later that month the trial of the financier Lord Spens and Mr Seelig (on different charges) collapsed. In February 1993, an American lawyer, Thomas Ward, was acquitted on Guinness charges. The affair was increasingly looking less like a triumphant investigation and punishment of wrongdoing than a fiasco—a view unaltered by Mr Saunders' victory yesterday.

The Guinness defendants during their trial (from left): Ernest Saunders, Gerald Ronson, Anthony Farnes and Jack Lyons. COURTESY ILLUSTRATION: PRISCILLA COLEMAN

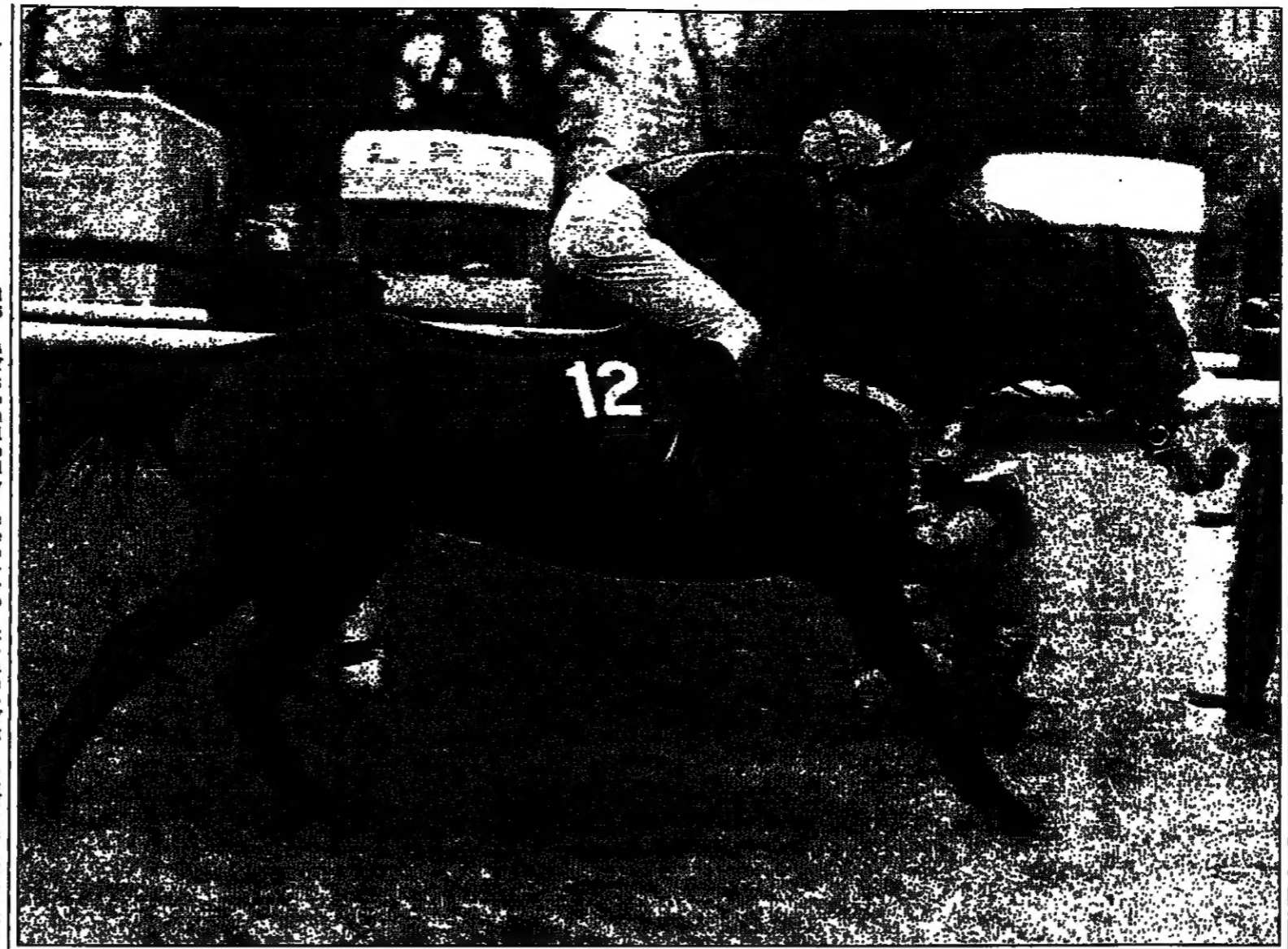
Advertisement for a computer system. It features a large image of a computer monitor and keyboard. Text includes: 'Buy Now, Pay June Next Year', '£999.93 inc. VAT', '£851 + VAT', 'Guaranteed 2 DAY PRE-Christmas DELIVERY', 'Unbeatable!', '3 Easy Ways To Pay', '16MB RAM, 256K Cache', 'P150+ Processor', '1000MB Hard Disk', 'Fast 64-bit Graphics & MPEG', 'Full CD Multimedia', 'Massive Software Bundle', 'Quick Personal Finance', 'FREE Fax/Internet Modem'. It also lists 'System Options' and 'Other Options'. At the bottom, it says 'TIME 01282 777 111'.

سكنا من الامل

Racing Wakeham lords it

BHB critics hit for six at annual forum says Chris Hawkins

AS Tristram Ricketts rose to open the proceedings for the British Horseracing Industry's annual forum in London yesterday the lights in the lecture theatre of the Royal Geographical Society dimmed. It seemed highly appropriate to those preparing themselves for a period of gloom enveloping racing, but Ricketts, the BHB's chief executive, is obviously good at batting in bad light. Crisis - what crisis? was the theme of his speech. Attendances were up, sponsorships were up, owners were up, even prize money was up - so what was all this talk about BHB's lack of leadership and activity? Matthew McCloy, chairman of the industry committee, came in at number two and played a similar breezy knock. A financial plan, which some said did not exist and had never even been thought about, was in place and "every organisation had been part of its development and had signed up to it."



Winning Quest... Mick Fitzgerald and Rough Quest scoring at Folkestone yesterday

Rough Quest proves his King George fitness

ROUGH QUEST was the star attraction at Folkestone yesterday and the Grand National winner turned on the style with a victory in a novice hurdle. It was his first race of the season and he now heads for the King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day. Terry Casey, the gelding's trainer, said: "I was really frustrated when Haydock was called off last Saturday as we badly needed to get a race into him. This will have put him right for Kempton."

to his main rival. He had two lengths to make up on the run-in, but responded well to get up close home and score by half a length. Fitzgerald joked afterwards: "I was worried I was getting there too soon so one might have thought that I planned that mistake."

"Nathen Lad will go for the King George after Bangor, at least that is the plan today," said trainer Jenny Pitman. "The horse is well and is far enough forward."

Bangor runners and riders with form guide

Table with columns for race number, time, runner name, and rider. Includes sections for Bangor Handicap, Bangor Novices, Bangor Hurdle, Bangor Chase, Bangor Stakes, Bangor Plate, Bangor Cup, Bangor Bowl, Bangor Shield, Bangor Trophy, Bangor Challenge Cup, Bangor Challenge Cup, Bangor Challenge Cup, Bangor Challenge Cup.

Catterick

Table with columns for race number, time, runner name, and rider. Includes sections for Catterick Handicap, Catterick Novices, Catterick Hurdle, Catterick Chase, Catterick Stakes, Catterick Plate, Catterick Cup, Catterick Bowl, Catterick Shield, Catterick Trophy, Catterick Challenge Cup, Catterick Challenge Cup, Catterick Challenge Cup, Catterick Challenge Cup.

Exeter

Table with columns for race number, time, runner name, and rider. Includes sections for Exeter Handicap, Exeter Novices, Exeter Hurdle, Exeter Chase, Exeter Stakes, Exeter Plate, Exeter Cup, Exeter Bowl, Exeter Shield, Exeter Trophy, Exeter Challenge Cup, Exeter Challenge Cup, Exeter Challenge Cup, Exeter Challenge Cup.

Exeter

Table with columns for race number, time, runner name, and rider. Includes sections for Exeter Handicap, Exeter Novices, Exeter Hurdle, Exeter Chase, Exeter Stakes, Exeter Plate, Exeter Cup, Exeter Bowl, Exeter Shield, Exeter Trophy, Exeter Challenge Cup, Exeter Challenge Cup, Exeter Challenge Cup, Exeter Challenge Cup.

Results

Table with columns for race name, winner, runner-up, and other details. Includes results for Folkestone, Bangor, Catterick, and Exeter.

Double helping for Dobbin

TONY DOBBIN took his total to 27 at Musselburgh yesterday when riding a double on Triennium and Montreuve for local trainer Peter Monaghan. "Triennium, who underwent a tubing operation following his previous outing at Newmarket, was sent off the 10-1 favourite for the Soles Hole Selling Handicap Hurdle and won like a "good thing."

Double helping for Dobbin

"They either take to it (tubing) or they don't and today was the acid test," said Monaghan. "They were a bad bunch, but it's nice to see Triennium get a winning chance."

Double helping for Dobbin

Montreuve was a spare ride for Dobbin in the Links Chase, taking over from Gary Cabbil, who was badly shaken after being unseated by Miss Mont in Triennium's race.

Sport in brief Agassi set for Brazil

ANDRE AGASSI, anxious to revive his form after a disappointing year, yesterday volunteered to play in the first round of the Davis Cup in Brazil in February. "It's intense competition and I need it," he said. The United States team has not been named but Pete Sampras, the world No. 1, has already declined to play in the first round.

Equestrianism

John Whitaker, Britain's only winner in this season's Volvo World Cup qualifier series, is determined to win Saturday's qualifier and the Grand Prix which climaxes the five-day London Olympia championship which starts today. Whitaker, 41 and top Briton in the first individual rankings, has never won those prizes. Olympia is showing its 25th year with a UK record prize fund of £220,000.

Hockey

Birmingham will be England's representatives in the first World Cup Indoor Championship at Glasgow's Kelvin Hall on January 11-12, writes Pat Rowley. That weekend the Midlands' two leading clubs will be playing in the first national rounds of the English Indoor Championship, so Birmingham will lose several of their best players. They have been drawn against Copenhagen, Madrid and Vienna. Glasgow will meet Canberra, Johannesburg and New York.

Sailing

Plans to build the America's Cup base in downtown Auckland could be delayed for six months by Maori objections, writes Bob Fisher in Auckland. The Ngai Tahu Maori Trust, a Maori group which claims prior ownership of the seabed, has objected to the development of the Viaduct Basin to house the challenging syndicates. Time is short: work will take 22 months and the Basin has to be open by December 1998.

Large vertical advertisement on the left side of the page, partially obscured by other text. Includes phrases like 'Buy Now', 'Pay Just', 'Next Year', and '851'.

Soccer

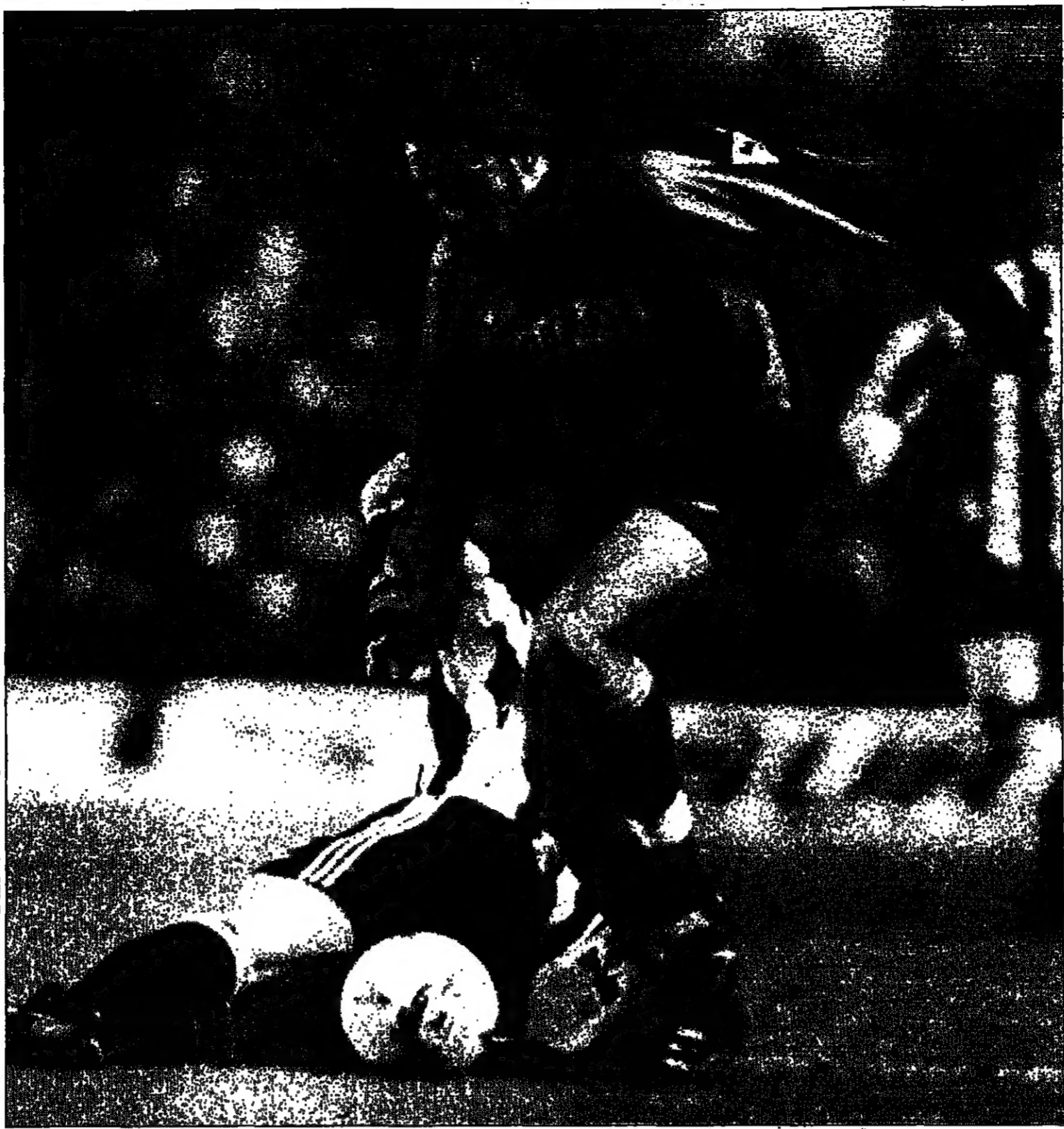
Premiership: Coventry 2, Newcastle 1

Huckerby deepens the gloom

Tom Evans

NEWCASTLE United had \$21 million of striking talent on view at Highfield Road. Strange to think that the player they sold for a relative pittance four weeks ago was the man who mattered most last night.

though, when first Shearer confounded Daish with a delightful piece of skill before testing Ogrizovic, then Albert did the same with a powerful header from Gillespie's free-kick.



Left foot forward... Darren Huckerby, who gave his former club an early reminder of his goalscoring talents, slips past Robert Lee.

City again in hunt for Kidd

Sam Ross

MANCHESTER CITY are considering making a second, audacious attempt to convince Brian Kidd that he should swap the No. 2 job at Old Trafford for the manager's position at Maine Road.

First Division: Crystal Palace 0, Sheffield United 1

Walker in Palace coup

Jeremy Alexander

DAVE BASSETT's past caught up with him last night. Sheffield United were left last December after eight years as manager, rolled over Crystal Palace to open a six-point gap between these sides in the leading pack as United moved above Barnsley and level with Bolton on points.

tion and Walker sent Kathchou clear, but Day's low scoop prevented the cross-shot curling inside the far post.

West Ham say no to tax exile's £30m

Andersen's triple blow

Patrick O'Connell

WEST HAM's board yesterday thwarted a bid to take control of the Premiership club by a millionaire tax exile who was willing to inject £30 million.

Scottish Premier Division: Rangers 4, Kilmarnock 2

Andersen's triple blow

Patrick O'Connell

PAUL GASCOIGNE'S missed first-half penalty became irrelevant as Rangers overcame the concession of an early goal with a bundle of their own, highlighted by Bo Andersen's hat-trick.

Scottish Premier Division: Rangers 4, Kilmarnock 2

Andersen's triple blow

Patrick O'Connell

The tactic worked until four minutes before half-time when a Lekovic clearance landed at the feet of Laudrup, who immediately played it ahead of the incoming Andersen.

Scottish Premier Division: Rangers 4, Kilmarnock 2

Andersen's triple blow

Patrick O'Connell

The tactic worked until four minutes before half-time when a Lekovic clearance landed at the feet of Laudrup, who immediately played it ahead of the incoming Andersen.

Table with 2 columns: Pool Name and Forecast. Includes sections for FA Carling Premiership, Nationwide League, and Scottish League.

Klinsmann is linked with England again

JURGEN KLINSMANN will be allowed to leave Bayern Munich next June, renewing speculation that he could return to England, according to a German newspaper report.

Results

Table of sports results including Soccer, American Football, Alpine Skiing, Basketball, and Cricket.

Skiing

Tombs's second strength

ALBERTO TOMBA celebrated his return from injury with second place in yesterday's slalom at Madonna di Campiglio.

Team talk

Table with 2 columns: Team Name and Score. Lists various football teams and their recent match results.

Ice Hockey

Hawks back in land of the living

KINGSTON Hawks have raised the funds to complete the season. The Premier League club, who last week suspended their fixtures while seeking money, will be back on the ice at Guildford on Saturday and at home to Slough on Sunday.

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

Sports Politics

Nick Varley reports on the repercussions of yesterday's decision to turn Britain's most famous sporting landmark into the new national stadium

Wembley aims to take on the world

AN unprecedented hat-trick of world-class events was brought closer by yesterday's choice of Wembley as the new national stadium...

The British Athletic Federation confirmed it will now apply. Its spokesman Tony Ward said it had received a "pretty strong" indication from the sport's world governing body...

national stadium in London is that it remains viable beyond the Commonwealth Games. Councilor Graham Stringer, leader of the Manchester bid, admitted that the stadium and pool were probably the best they could have hoped for...

conditions of its approval is that it remains viable beyond the Commonwealth Games. Councilor Graham Stringer, leader of the Manchester bid, admitted that the stadium and pool were probably the best they could have hoped for...

of the English Sports Council, said that Wembley's international prestige had been a major factor in its success. "Both bids had their attractions. Wembley, significantly, included proposals for a 'flagship events' programme from the potential users of the stadium..."

plans a similar structure at Ajax's new stadium in Amsterdam has endured. "The existing stadium will be almost entirely demolished - only the famous Twin Towers will remain - from summer 1998. But it has not been decided if that will mean closing it during rebuilding work scheduled to take between two and three years..."

um's owner Wembley plc admitted: "We have got to make the Oscar, now we've got to make the film." The company will give the new stadium to a trust to get around rules forbidding Lottery money benefiting the private sector...

minister, issued a warning: "The Sports Council have clearly been satisfied that the sum of £120 million of public money from the Lottery will be spent wisely. The Labour Party wish to be equally satisfied that no public money will find its way into private shareholders' pockets, and that ticket pricing will reflect the ability to pay of the vast majority of sports fans..."

Cup final could go north for one season

THE FA Cup final may move from Wembley for the first time since 1925 as a result of the massive redevelopment work to be carried out at the stadium...

domestic fixture being played at Wembley. But rebuilding work might mean the famous stadium is unavailable for the showpiece game for at least one season, near the turn of the century...

hoped the city's new 60,000-seat venue would host the game, and other finals, if Wembley were closed. "It is a possibility. Our stadium will be up and running by then and, depending on negotiations with the FA and the Rugby League, it could stage the games," he said.

Cricket

Curtain up on Atherton's desperados

David Hopps looks for England to perform in Bulawayo after dire rehearsals



Reefing it up in Bulawayo... Botham makes a pointed observation during practice but Lloyd's thoughts are kept to himself

MICHAEL Atherton today faces the greatest crisis of his captaincy since the ball-tampering affair, as England attempt to rectify an inadequate start to their tour of Zimbabwe with victory in the first Test at Queen's. Atherton survived allegations more than two years ago about soil in his pockets at Lord's, but egg on his face might be more difficult to explain away...

entire number of reasonably competent players and they would hardly fill a white-water raft on the Zambezi. There are some resources, however, that are not available to England against Australia next summer and the signs indicate that his captaincy is valuable, but only so much failure can be tolerated and the time is right for an underachieving side to come to his assistance...

Nobody was bandying odds of 40-1 yesterday, with most local bookmakers talking of an even game. Yet England, for all the horrors of the past three weeks, have the capacity to win, and win well; all they have to do is believe it. As Raymond Illingworth, the former chairman of selectors, muttered before disappearing into a Spanish sunset, if we cannot beat Zimbabwe we really are in a mess.

rests between Chris Silverwood and Andrew Caddick - unless England are influenced by suggestions that the Queen's pitch will possess more pace and bounce than its sluggish one-day counterpart on Sunday and hence drop the left-arm spinner Phil Tufnell to accommodate four seamers.

night, however, the curtain rises and we all thrill to a wondrous performance. Alternatively you might like to regard the first Test as a film. At the Rainbow Cinema in downtown Bulawayo the late show this week happens to be Desperado. It has an 18 certificate and is not for the squeamish. Somehow that sounds more like it.

not really an issue which the teams can handle on their own." Phillips also praised Fia's prompt action in sending the Italian government, via the Automobile Club of Italy, an urgent memorandum outlining the difficulties brought about by Frank Williams and five others over Ayrton Senna's death.

Motor Racing

Boycott mood spreads after death charges

THE sport's chiefs admitted yesterday that Formula One teams may refuse to compete in Italy next year in the wake of the manslaughter charges brought against Frank Williams and five others over Ayrton Senna's death. The world governing body Fia warned that it might face "difficulty" persuading competitors from outside Italy to participate in the San Marino and Italian grands prix. There may also be a problem recruiting race officials after the charge against Roland Brunseyaers, the Belgian race director who oversaw the tragedy at Imola in 1994.

Phillips also praised Fia's prompt action in sending the Italian government, via the Automobile Club of Italy, an urgent memorandum outlining the difficulties brought about by Frank Williams and five others over Ayrton Senna's death. "This is a uniquely Italian problem requiring a uniquely Italian solution," said Mosley. If there is no solution, however, replacing the two Italian events would not pose any problem for Fia. There are already 17 races - one more than usual - on the 1997 calendar and Jerez, in southern Spain, could easily step in to keep 16 rounds in the championship next season.

Mansell rejects Jordan chance

NIGEL MANSSELL has decided not to return to Formula One next year, after his last test week at the wheel of a Jordan-Ford in Barcelona. "The idea of the test was originally to have some fun, but my natural competitive instinct took over and a return to F1 with Jordan became a serious possibility," said the 43-year-old Briton. "However, after consultations with my family and business advisers, I realised that my schedule would not permit me to give sufficient time to the Jordan team."

White call to cover for injured Irani

CRAIG WHITE, on holiday on the Queensland coast after England's successful tour of Australia, will join the senior party in Zimbabwe three days before the start of the second Test which begins in Harare on Boxing Day, writes David Hopps. The Yorkshireman has been called into the squad as an additional all-rounder while doubts persist about the fitness of Ronnie Irani. A scan on Irani's back injury in Harare on Monday revealed a "hot spot" which will prevent him from bowling for three days, and it may be a further week before the seriousness of the injury can be determined.

in Australia in mid-October and, depending on circumstances, may well last into March. He played the last of his 35 Tests 16 months ago against West Indies at Trent Bridge. He was generally perceived to be a favourite of the former chairman Raymond Illingworth, so much so that it preyed on his confidence. The fact that a new management team have now turned to him should comfort him that his worth is more widely appreciated.

Wells is a career-best haul as West Indies ended a run of seven defeats with an emphatic seven-wicket win over Pakistan in their World Series match in Adelaide yesterday. After restricting Pakistan to 178 all out in 48.4 overs thanks to their makeshift spinner, West Indies reached 177 for three off only 36.1 overs. Junior Murray equalling his best score in one-day cricket with 86 off 79 deliveries.

Wells is a career-best haul as West Indies ended a run of seven defeats with an emphatic seven-wicket win over Pakistan in their World Series match in Adelaide yesterday. After restricting Pakistan to 178 all out in 48.4 overs thanks to their makeshift spinner, West Indies reached 177 for three off only 36.1 overs. Junior Murray equalling his best score in one-day cricket with 86 off 79 deliveries.

Wells primed to join Kent and swell Sussex exodus

ALAN WELLS, stripped of the Sussex captaincy seven weeks ago, is on the verge of joining Kent. The experienced 35-year-old batsman, who won a Test cap against West Indies in 1995, has been offered attractive terms by Kent, believed to be over five years.

firm offer to the Newhaven-born player, who has two years of his contract to run. Jimmy Adams took five wickets in a career-best haul as West Indies ended a run of seven defeats with an emphatic seven-wicket win over Pakistan in their World Series match in Adelaide yesterday. After restricting Pakistan to 178 all out in 48.4 overs thanks to their makeshift spinner, West Indies reached 177 for three off only 36.1 overs. Junior Murray equalling his best score in one-day cricket with 86 off 79 deliveries.

Chess

Schoolboy McShane threatens masters

THE 12-year-old Luke McShane is close to achieving Britain's youngest ever International Master result after his fine start at the Colchester Masters in Edinburgh, writes Leonard Barden. McShane, the UK's most promising junior since Nigel Short, outplayed Scotland's No. 5 Douglas Bryson in 51 moves and leads the 10-player entry with three wins and three draws. His 1 1/2 star schoolboy remaining points from his remaining three games to achieve the master norm. Matthew Sadler did this at 13; Britain's top two players, Short and Michael Adams, at 14. Three IM results are needed for the full title, which all managed within a year. McShane, who won the world under-10 championship

aged eight, is already the youngest Briton to beat a grandmaster and can break Short's record, set in 1978, as the youngest UK international tournament winner if he wins in Edinburgh. Garry Kasparov, joint leader with Vassily Ivanchuk of the Ukraine in the Las Palmas tournament, has increased his lead over his rivals in the January 1997 FIDE world rankings. The world champion has 2,758 points, 30 ahead of India's Vishy Anand and 35 in front of Russian rival Anatoly Karpov. The leading Briton in the list is Short in 10th place; Sadler is 26th, his best placing yet.

his bid hours before Monday's deadline, said: "I wasn't aware that the rugby committee was actually voting on the proposal and very surprised that people can make such an important decision so quickly. "Given a proper airing and if people are given time to assess the logic of what we have put to them, they will realise this is a sensible solution to a difficult situation. There should not be a knee-jerk reaction because of a supposed £1 million."

Rugby Union

Coventry set to reject soccer club takeover bid

COVENTRY CITY have suffered a setback in their attempt to take over the city's rugby club. The proposal centred on Coventry RFC selling their Coundon Road ground to finance redevelopment of the derelict Butts sports stadium and using the football club's Highfield Road for Sunday matches. However, the rugby club's committee have recommended that members vote at tomorrow's egn for a proposal submitted by the Leander property company which promises a move to a new stadium and £1 million from a share issue. City's chairman Bryan Richardson, who submitted

his bid hours before Monday's deadline, said: "I wasn't aware that the rugby committee was actually voting on the proposal and very surprised that people can make such an important decision so quickly. "Given a proper airing and if people are given time to assess the logic of what we have put to them, they will realise this is a sensible solution to a difficult situation. There should not be a knee-jerk reaction because of a supposed £1 million."

Swansea are hoping to sign Joos Joubert, the Springbok full-back Andre Joubert's cousin, who had an outstanding game at centre last Saturday when South Africa defeated the Emerging Wales team at Swansea. The 24-year-old, who plays for Natal, met Swansea officials after the game but is expected to become a full international in the next few months and that is likely to put him out of the club's price range. West Hartlepool have recalled John Stabler for their Pilkington Cup fifth-round tie at Newcastle on Sunday. Mark King replaces the injured centre Chris John.

Cricket Winter Tour - Zimbabwe 1 Day International For regular score updates call 0891 22 88 29

Ski Hotline The Latest snow and weather reports from almost 200 resorts in Europe and North America. By phone or fax call: 0891 002 006

als
Zimbabwe welcome back they are

Rough Quest back with a victory, page 13
City make a new play for Kidd, page 14

Wembley captures the national prize, page 15
Atherton faces a test of resolve, page 15

SportsGuardian

SOCCER

Premiership: Liverpool 4, Nottingham Forest 2

Liverpool soar to the top

IAN ROSS

LIVERPOOL, scoring freely at Anfield for the second time in three days, find themselves at the top of the Premiership by two points this morning, a ominous sight no doubt for Arsenal, Wimbledon and the others that share the Merseyside club's lofty ambition.

Despite the emphatic margin of their victory this was not a vintage performance, but it did not really need to be against a Nottingham Forest side that fought hard but is fast beginning to appreciate that relegation is more of a probability than a possibility. They opened brightly enough, but the sweet rhythm that Liverpool had struck against Middlesbrough on Saturday seemed to have suffered no disruption at all during three days of relative inactivity, and they rolled over Forest like a rising tide.

McManaman's free-spirited breaks down the right constantly opened up a defence which, the dependable Pearce apart, quivered like a leaf in a stiff breeze.

It is collectively that Forest continue to disappoint, for although the component parts would appear to be in place there is no discernible sense of unity. Indeed it was typical of Clark's current ill-fortune that he had lost the influential Chettle to injury on an evening which screamed out for experienced defenders.

After only four minutes Allen had to hook the ball off the line after Wright's header took a fortuitous deflection off Ruddock's shoulder.

After his heroics at the weekend it was almost refreshing to be reminded that Fowler is sometimes subject to human frailties. In the sixth minute his precise lob from 20 yards drifted over the advancing Crossley but cleared the crossbar by inches.



Ex-rated horror show for Forest... Collymore, their former striker, opens the scoring for Liverpool at Anfield last night. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID HANFLETT

Forest's respite was brief, however, Liverpool scoring their inevitable opening goal after seven minutes. It was no masterpiece, though. Crossley's poor clearance arrived at the feet of Fowler, who unselfishly pushed it forward

into the path of Stan Collymore. The former Forest striker and the current Forest goalkeeper arrived at the ball at precisely the same moment, but fortune favoured Collymore, who succeeded in getting the first touch and

finding the unguarded target with a low shot. Forest fleetingly hinted at a revival as Liverpool's swaggering self-confidence threatened to get the better of them. Unfortunately, just as against Blackburn Rovers and New-

castle United, their chances fell to Haaland. A talented player with a burgeoning reputation for looking gift horses in the mouth, he squandered two very presentable openings before Liverpool went further ahead after 27 minutes.

Collymore, freed down the right by Babb's delightful pass, reached the byline before lobbing over a smart cross which Fowler converted with a close-range header. It seemed probable at this point that Forest would curl up and die, but somehow they restored the game's competitive edge 11 minutes before the interval when Kevin Campbell turned in a scruffy goal after Liverpool had failed to deal adequately with an Allen corner.

The goal was rather more than Forest deserved and made a mockery of Liverpool's overwhelming superiority, but it did little to effect a change in the balance of

power. Liverpool treated it as a minor setback, a pin-prick of an irritation, and within six minutes of the restart they had scored again. This effort was, by any other name, a fluke. Des Lytle heading into his own net in a desperate attempt to clear a ball that looped to him off the legs of his goalkeeper.

And you assumed

NO GIVES

were all take and give

Assume nothing - but expect some pleasant surprises! A monthly American Express statement not only tells you what you've spent, but also carries special offers your spending has earned - things like savings at exclusive hotels, or a free bottle of wine with your meal at a local restaurant, or even 15% off your next raincoat. There are literally hundreds of offers available each month. We only select the ones most suited to you, and print them right on the statement. So every month, you could be getting something special from us, simply by spending on the Card.

To find out how we can help you do more call:

0800 700767

Cards

American Express Services Europe Limited, Reg. Office, Portland House, 1 Stag Place, London SW1E 5SZ, Reg. No. 1833128.

BBC's review almost over the Hill



Jim White

SUNDAY evening proved beyond question that bitter-sweet is no longer the best-known oxymoron in the English language. Damon Hill was voted the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year.

Uninspiring he may be but Hill showed a nifty gear-change in the chicane to shake off concerned campaigners mounted on behalf of rivals. As usual the fishing lobby tried to have their man, Bob Nudd, installed through vigorous gerrymandering, and a bunch of students flooded the BBC with e-mail nominating Justin Fashanu.

The most convincing effort came from Regatta magazine, which printed a voting slip with Steve Redgrave's name on it and urged readers to post it in. Like the Labour Party apparatchiks' efforts to spin Tony Blair to the Today programme's Man of the Year award, however, it failed and Redgrave, possibly for the first time in his life, trailed in second.

Hill, blinking softly as he received the trophy, blandly delivered the required platitudes. These, oddly, did not include thanks to Williams for supplying him with the tools with which to become Formula One champion of the world. Though on second thoughts such a comment might have been a bit superfluous, like Evander Holyfield thanking his mum and dad for giving him his fists.

But Hill did pay generous tribute to the BBC for covering his sport so expertly. Which added an extra poignancy to the proceedings: next season the BBC will not be broadcasting the sport in which its Personality of the Year competes.

Indeed there was a sense in which Sunday's programme marked less a review of the year than the end of an era: motor racing is on its way from the corporation's clutches. The FA Cup will soon be gone, and who knows what is happening with the Five Nations Championship?

It won't be long before the BBC's entire Sports Review resembles the round-up of the boxing year screened on Sunday, which, thanks to the democratic efforts of Messrs King

and Warren, is already reduced to a couple of stills and some footage of pugilists on training jogs along the beach.

The shame is that the BBC does this kind of thing so well; no matter how dull the winner of the award is, the Sports Review of the Year is an essential watch-in for fans across the country.

As usual there were plenty of reminiscences: Robbie and Henry Paul showing Jack Rowell how rugby can be played; Greg Norman proving that it is not only the England cricket team who are prone to self-destruction; and Dickie Bird walking out at Lord's for the last time so choked with emotion that he attempted to wipe away his tears without first removing his spectacles.

There was fun in the studio too: a re-enactment of Euro 96 involving schoolchildren which was only marginally less laughable than the actual event's opening ceremony; Willie Carson and Walter Swinburn presenting Frankie Dettori with a birthday cake in the shape of a horse's head, apparently supplied by bakers to the Mafai; and a Parsylympian flirting with Sue Barker (he admitted afterwards he was visually impaired). Also there was Des Lynam, gently teasing the superstars in his audience.

"So," he said to Terry Venables, who had clearly been putting a few hours under the sunlamp in preparation for taking up his job as Australia's football coach, "you've got the big one coming up... against Tahiti."

And when Michael Johnson claimed that his run in the Olympic 200 metres final was not by any means his perfect race, Des, quick as the flash from a pair of gold stakes, responded: "Where did you go wrong, exactly?"

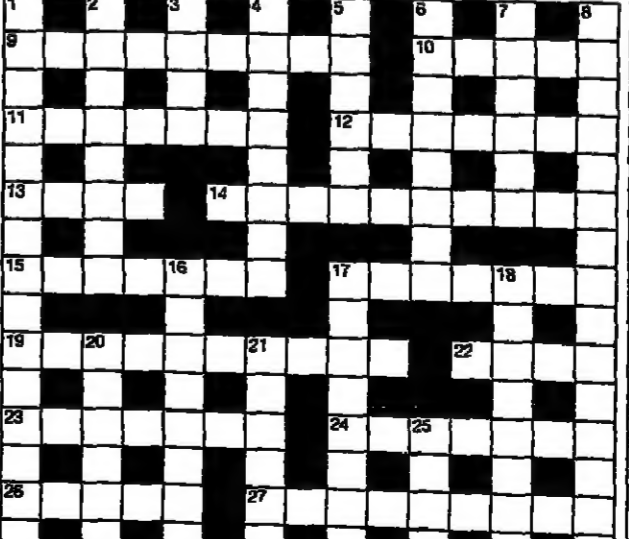
AS ALWAYS, too, there were moments best forgotten. This year it was a penalty shoot-out involving Dettori, Donovon Bailey, Tim Henman, Dennis Lewis and Frank Bruno, who, forgetting his trousers, cut a pantomime figure in shorts, no socks and a pair of crocodile-skin loafers.

In goal was Peter Shilton, who last Saturday completed his 999th league match when Leyton Orient played Fulham. The sight of Bruno's winner spinning off a loafer and trickling through Shilton's legs will not have had many Os fans licking their lips in anticipation of his 1,000th appearance.

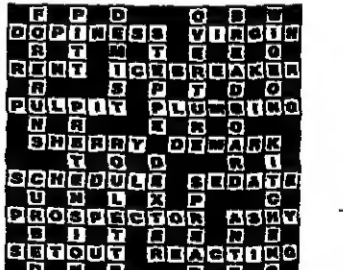
For the rest of us it threw up equally sobering possibilities: that within five years the biggest event the BBC will have to review will be pre-celebrity penalty shoot-out.

Guardian Crossword No 20,839

Set by Araucaria



- Across**
- 9 Diamonds left in camera holder to be picked up by sucker (4,3,4)
 - 10 Collation in French for the one church (5)
 - 11 Call journalist a model character in the Doctor's Dilemma (7)
 - 12 Escaper makes arbitrator turn to horse (7)
 - 13 See 22
 - 14 Swallow, one of a pack, is plastic (5,4)
 - 15 Drinker and how he's eyed food? (4,3)
 - 17 Skip a page for a rough and toothed blade (3,4)
 - 19 As a bridge over the Camel should be? (10)
 - 22, 13 Lost holding each way in wet part of Scotland (4,4)
- Down**
- 1 Moderate half-way to 8? (6-2-3-4)
 - 2 Shrub from North African islands (8)
 - 3, 25 Jokes about boy king in his Sunday best (4,4)
 - 4 "We galloped..." (hell for leather?) (3,5)
 - 5 Why bridge players get a bit cross (6)
 - 6 Richard at no. 1 - more apt to beetle? (5,3)
 - 7 Puzzle with variations (6)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,839

- 8 Extinction of family at railhead (3,3,2,3,4)
 - 16 Hotelier turned up before Prohibition without a licence (8)
 - 17 Sound upper part of bridge, according to chief priest (8)
 - 18 Necromantically raised chap up on wrong date (8)
 - 20 Lane for computer? (5)
 - 21 Land to preserve commercial article (5)
 - 25 See 3
- Solution tomorrow**
- 23 Suck? Then call our solutions (for an 0800 339 322). Call cost 50p per minute Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm, and 45p per minute at all other times. Service supplied by AT3.

G2 page 5

سكنا من الامه